









MAUD.

Maud Locksley Hall and other Poems

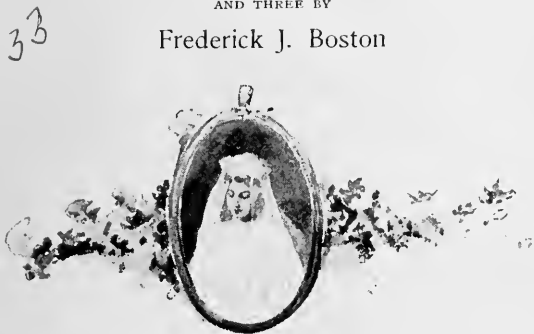
BY
Alfred Lord Tennyson
POET LAUREATE

*VIGNETTE EDITION. WITH NINETY-SEVEN
NEW ILLUSTRATIONS*

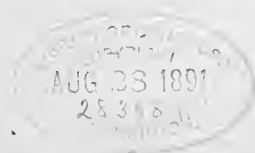
BY
Charles Howard Johnson

AND THREE BY

Frederick J. Boston



NEW YORK
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY
MDCCCXCI



PR 5567

.A1
1891

Copyright, 1891,
By FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY

12-39370

CONTENTS.



MAUD ; A MONODRAMA :	PAGE
PART I	I
PART II	62
PART III	81
THE TALKING OAK	85
LOVE AND DUTY	100
THE GOLDEN YEAR	104
ULYSSES	107
TITHONUS	111
LOCKSLEY HALL	115
GODIVA	134
THE DAY-DREAM :	
PROLOGUE	139
THE SLEEPING PALACE	140
THE SLEEPING BEAUTY	143
THE ARRIVAL	146
THE REVIVAL	148
THE DEPARTURE	151

THE DAY-DREAM— <i>continued</i> :	PAGE
MORAL	153
L'ENVOI	154
EPILOGUE	157
AMPHION	159
ST. AGNES' EVE	163
SIR GALAHAD	166
EDWARD GRAY	170
WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL MONOLOGUE	172
LADY CLARE	183
THE CAPTAIN	188
THE LORD OF BURLEIGH	191
THE VOYAGE	196
SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE .	201
A FAREWELL	204
THE BEGGAR MAID	206
THE EAGLE	207
"MOVE EASTWARD, HAPPY EARTH, AND LEAVE"	208
"COME NOT, WHEN I AM DEAD"	209
THE LETTERS	210
THE VISION OF SIN	213
TO —, AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS	223
TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE .	225

	PAGE
"BREAK, BREAK, BREAK"	226
THE POET'S SONG	228
THE BROOK	229
AYLMER'S FIELD	239
SEA DREAMS	275
LUCRETIVS	287
ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WEL- LINGTON	299
THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1852	311
THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE	313
ODE SUNG AT THE OPENING OF THE INTERNA- TIONAL EXHIBITION	316
A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA	319
A WELCOME TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS MARIE ALEXANDROVNA, DUCHESS OF EDIN- BURGH	321
THE GRANDMOTHER	324
NORTHERN FARMER, OLD STYLE	335
NORTHERN FARMER, NEW STYLE	342
THE DAISY	348
TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE	354
IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ	356
WILL	358

	PAGE
IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON	359
THE FLOWER	360
REQUIESCAT	362
THE SAILOR BOY	364
THE ISLET	366
CHILD-SONGS :	
1. THE CITY CHILD	368
2. MINNIE AND WINNIE	370
THE SPITEFUL LETTER	371
LITERARY SQUABBLES	372
THE VICTIM	373
WAGES	378
THE HIGHER PANTHEISM	379
THE VOICE AND THE PEAK	381
"FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL"	383
A DEDICATION	384

MAUD ; A MONODRAMA.



PART I.

I.

I.

I HATE the dreadful hollow behind the little wood,
Its lips in the field above are dabbled with blood-red
heath,
The red-ribb'd ledges drip with a silent horror of
blood,
And Echo there, whatever is ask'd her, answers
"Death."

II.

For there in the ghastly pit long since a body was
found,
His who had given me life—O father ! O God !
was it well ?—
Mangled, and flatten'd, and crush'd, and dinted
into the ground :
There yet lies the rock that fell with him when he
fell.

III.

Did he fling himself down? who knows? for a vast
speculation had fail'd,
And ever he mutter'd and madden'd, and ever
wann'd with despair,



"I HATE THE DREADFUL HOLLOW BEHIND THE LITTLE
WOOD."

And out he walk'd when the wind like a broken
worldling wail'd,
And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove
thro' the air.

IV.

I remember the time, for the roots of my hair were
stirr'd
By a shuffled step, by a dead weight trail'd, by a
whisper'd fright,
And my pulses closed their gates with a shock on
my heart as I heard
The shrill-edged shriek of a mother divide the
shuddering night.

V.

Villainy somewhere! whose? One says, we are
villains all.
Not he: his honest fame should at least by me be
maintained:
But that old man, now lord of the broad estate and
the Hall,
Dropt off gorged from a scheme that had left us
flaccid and drain'd.

VI.

Why do they prate of the blessings of Peace? we
have made them a curse,
Pickpockets, each hand lusting for all that is not
its own;
And lust of gain, in the spirit of Cain, is it better
or worse
Than the heart of the citizen hissing in war on his
own hearthstone?

VII.

But these are the days of advance, the works of the
men of mind,
When who but a fool would have faith in a trades-
man's ware or his word?
Is it peace or war? Civil war, as I think, and that
of a kind
The viler, as underhand, not openly bearing the
sword.

VIII.

Sooner or later I too may passively take the print
Of the golden age — why not? I have neither hope
nor trust ;
May make my heart as a millstone, set my face as
a flint,
Cheat and be cheated, and die : who knows? we are
ashes and dust.

IX.

Peace sitting under her olive, and slurring the days
gone by,
When the poor are hovell'd and hustled together,
each sex, like swine,
When only the ledger lives, and when only not all
men lie ;
Peace in her vineyard — yes ! — but a company
forges the wine.

X.

And the vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's
head,
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the
trampled wife,
And chalk and alum and plaster are sold to the
poor for bread,
And the spirit of murder works in the very means
of life,

XI.

And Sleep must lie down arm'd, for the villainous
centre-bits
Grind on the wakeful ear in the hush of the moon-
less nights,
While another is cheating the sick of a few last
gasps, as he sits
To pestle a poison'd poison behind his crimson
lights.

XII.

When a Mammonite mother kills her babe for a
burial fee,
And Timour-Mammon grins on a pile of children's
bones,
Is it peace or war? better, war ! loud war by land
and by sea,
War with a thousand battles, and shaking a hundred
thrones.

XIII.

For I trust it an enemy's fleet came yonder round
by the hill,
And the rushing battle-bolt sang from the three-
decker out of the foam,



“FOR I TRUST IF AN ENEMY'S FLEET CAME YONDER ROUND
BY THE HILL.”

That the smooth-faced snubnosed rogue would leap
from his counter and till,
And strike, if he could, were it but with his cheating
yardwand, home. —

XIV.

What! am I raging alone as my father raged in his
mood?
Must *I* too creep to the hollow and dash myself
down and die
Rather than hold by the law that I made, nevermore
to brood
On a horror of shatter'd limbs and a wretched swin-
dler's lie?

XV.

Would there be sorrow for *me*? there was *love* in
the passionate shriek,
Love for the silent thing that had made false haste
to the grave —
Wrapt in a cloak as I saw him, and thought he
would rise and speak
And rave at the lie and the liar, ah God, as he used
to rave.

XVI.

I am sick of the Hall and the hill, I am sick of the
moor and the main.
Why should I stay? can a sweeter chance ever come
to me here?
O, having the nerves of motion as well as the nerves
of pain,
Were it not wise if I fled from the place and the pit
and the fear?

XVII.

Workmen up at the Hall! — they are coming back
from abroad;
The dark old place will be gilt by the touch of a
millionaire:
I have heard, I know not whence, of the singular
beauty of Maud;
I play'd with the girl when a child; she promised
then to be fair.

XVIII.

Maud with her venturous climbings and tumbles
and childish escapes,
Maud the delight of the village, the ringing joy of
the Hall,
Maud with her sweet purse-mouth when my father
dangled the grapes,
Maud the beloved of my mother, the moon-faced
darling of all,—

XIX.

What is she now? My dreams are bad. She may
bring me a curse.
No, there is fatter game on the moor; she will let
me alone.
Thanks, for the fiend best knows whether woman
or man be worse.
I will bury myself in myself, and the Devil may
pipe to his own.

II.

Long have I sigh'd for a calm : God grant I may
find it at last !
It will never be broken by Maud, she has neither
savour nor salt,
But a cold and clear-cut face, as I found when her
carriage past,
Perfectly beautiful : let it be granted her : where is
the fault ?
All that I saw (for her eyes were downcast, not to
be seen)
Faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null,
Dead perfection, no more ; nothing more, if it had
not been
For a chance of travel, a paleness, an hour's defect
of the rose,
Or an underlip, you may call it a little too ripe, too
full,
Or the least little delicate aquiline curve in a sensi-
tive nose,
From which I escaped heart-free, with the least little
touch of spleen.

III.

Cold and clear-cut face, why come you so cruelly
meek,
Breaking a slumber in which all spleenful folly was
drown'd,
Pale with the golden beam of an eyelash dead on
the cheek,
Passionless, pale, cold face, star-sweet on a gloom
profound ;
Womanlike, taking revenge too deep for a transient
wrong
Done but in thought to your beauty, and ever as
pale as before
Growing and fading and growing upon me without
a sound,
Luminous, gemlike, ghostlike, deathlike, half the
night long,
Growing and fading and growing, till I could bear
it no more,
But arose, and all by myself in my own dark garden
ground,
Listening now to the tide in its broad-flung ship-
wrecking roar,
Now to the scream of a madden'd beach dragg'd
down by the wave,
Walk'd in a wintry wind by a ghastly glimmer, and
found
The shining daffodil dead, and Orion low in his grave.



"PASSIONLESS, PALE, COLD FACE."

(11)

IV.

I.

A million emeralds break from the ruby-budded
lime
In the little grove where I sit — ah, wherefore cannot I be
Like things of the season gay, like the bountiful
season bland,
When the far-off sail is blown by the breeze of a
softer clime,
Half-lost in the liquid azure bloom of a crescent of
sea,
The silent sapphire-spangled marriage ring of the
land?

II.

Below me, there, is the village, and looks how quiet
and small !
And yet bubbles o'er like a city, with gossip, scandal, and spite ;
And Jack on his ale-house bench has as many lies
as a Czar ;
And here on the landward side, by a red rock,
glimmers the Hall ;

And up in the high Hall-garden I see her pass like
a light ;
But sorrow seize me if ever that light be my leading
star !

III.

When have I bow'd to her father, the wrinkled
head of the race ?
I met her to-day with her brother, but not to her
brother I bow'd :
I bow'd to his lady-sister as she rode by on the
moor ;
But the fire of a foolish pride flash'd over her beau-
tiful face.
O child, you wrong your beauty, believe it, in being
so proud ;
Your father has wealth well-gotten, and I am name-
less and poor.

IV.

I keep but a man and a maid, ever ready to slander
and steal ;
I know it, and smile a hard-set smile, like a stoic, or
like
A wiser epicurean, and let the world have its way :
For nature is one with rapine, a harm no preacher
can heal ;
The mayfly is torn by the swallow, the sparrow
spear'd by the shrike,
And the whole little wood where I sit is a world of
plunder and prey.

V.

We are puppets, Man in his pride, and Beauty fair
in her flower ;
Do we move ourselves, or are moved by an unseen
hand at a game
That pushes us off from the board, and others ever
succeed ?
Ah yet, we cannot be kind to each other here for an
hour ;
We whisper, and hint, and chuckle, and grin at a
brother's shame ;
However we brave it out, we men are a little breed.

VI.

A monstrous eft was of old the Lord and Master of
Earth,
For him did his high sun flame, and his river billow-
ing ran,
And he felt himself in his force to be Nature's
crowning race.
As nine months go to the shaping an infant ripe for
his birth,
So many a million of ages have gone to the making
of man :
He now is first, but is he the last ? is he not too
base ?

VII.

The man of science himself is fonder of glory, and
vain,
An eye well-practised in nature, a spirit bounded
and poor ;

The passionate heart of
the poet is whirl'd into
folly and vice.

I would not marvel at
either, but keep a tem-
perate brain ;

For not to desire or ad-
mire, if a man could
learn it, were more

Than to walk all day like
the sultan of old in a
garden of spice.

VIII.

For the drift of the Maker
is dark, an Isis hid by
the veil.

Who knows the ways of
the world, how God
will bring them about?

Our planet is one, the suns
are many, the world is
wide.

Shall I weep if a Poland
fall? shall I shriek if
a Hungary fail?

Or an infant civilisation be ruled with rod or with
knout?

I have not made the world, and He that made it
will guide.



"LIKE THE SULTAN OF OLD."

IX.

Be mine a philosopher's life in the quiet woodland
ways,
Where if I cannot be gay let a passionless peace be
my lot,
Far-off from the clamour of liars belied in the hub-
bub of lies ;
From the long-neck'd geese of the world that are
ever hissing dispraise
Because their natures are little, and, whether he
heed it or not,
Where each man walks with his head in a cloud of
poisonous flies.

X.

And most of all would I flee from the cruel madness
of love,
The honey of poison-flowers and all the measureless
ill.
Ah, Maud, you milkwhite fawn, you are all unmeet
for a wife.
Your mother is mute in her grave as her image in
marble above ;
Your father is ever in London, you wander about at
your will ;
You have but fed on the roses and lain in the lilies
of life.

V.

. I.

A voice by the cedar tree
In the meadow under the Hall ;
She is singing an air that is known to me,
A passionate ballad gallant and gay,
A martial song like a trumpet's call !
Singing alone in the morning of life,
In the happy morning of life and of May,
Singing of men that in battle array,
Ready in heart and ready in hand,
March with banner and bugle and fife
To the death, for their native land.

II.

Maud with her exquisite face,
And wild voice pealing up to the sunny sky,
And feet like sunny gems on an English green,
Maud in the light of her youth and her grace,
Singing of Death, and of Honour that cannot die,
Till I well could weep for a time so sordid and mean
And myself so languid and base.

III.

Silence, beautiful voice !
Be still, for you only trouble the mind
With a joy in which I cannot rejoice,
A glory I shall not find.
Still ! I will hear you no more,
For your sweetness hardly leaves me a choice
But to move to the meadow and fall before
Her feet on the meadow grass, and adore,
Not her, who is neither courtly nor kind,
Not her, not her, but a voice.

VI.

I.

Morning arises stormy and pale,
No sun, but a wannish glare
In fold upon fold of hueless cloud,
And the budded peaks of the wood are bow'd
Caught and cuff'd by the gale :
I had fancied it would be fair.

II.

Whom but Maud should I meet
Last night, when the sunset burn'd
On the blossom'd gable-ends
At the head of the village street,
Whom but Maud should I meet ?
And she touch'd my hand with a smile so sweet,
She made me divine amends
For a courtesy not return'd.

III.

And thus a delicate spark
Of glowing and growing light
Thro' the livelong hours of the dark
Kept itself warm in the heart of my dreams,

Ready to burst in a colour'd flame ;
Till at last when the morning came
In a cloud, it faded, and seems
But an ashen-gray delight.

IV.

What if with her sunny hair,
And smile as sunny as cold,
She meant to weave me a snare
Of some coquettish deceit,
Cleopatra-like as of old
To entangle me when we met,
To have her lion roll in a silken net
And fawn at a victor's feet.

V.

Ah, what shall I be at fifty
Should Nature keep me alive,
If I find the world so bitter
When I am but twenty-five?
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile were all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet.

VI.

What if tho' her eyes seemed full
Of a kind intent to me,

What if that dandy-despot, he,
That jewell'd mass of millinery,
That oil'd and curl'd Assyrian Bull
Smelling of musk and of insolence,
Her brother, from whom I keep aloof,
Who wants the finer politic sense
To mask, tho' but in his own behoof,
With a glassy smile his brutal scorn —
What if he had told her yestermorn
How prettily for his own sweet sake
A face of tenderness might be feign'd,
And a moist mirage in desert eyes,
That so, when the rotten hustings shake
In another month to his brazen lies,
A wretched vote may be gain'd.

VII.

For a raven ever croaks, at my side,
Keep watch and ward, keep watch and ward,
Or thou wilt prove their tool.
Yea, too, myself from myself I guard,
For often a man's own angry pride
Is cap and bells for a fool.

VIII.

Perhaps the smile and tender tone
Came out of her pitying womanhood,
For am I not, am I not, here alone
So many a summer since she died,
My mother, who was so gentle and good?
Living alone in an empty house,

Here half-hid in the gleaming wood,
Where I hear the dead at midday moan,
And the shrieking rush of the wainscot mouse,
And my own sad name in corners cried,
When the shiver of dancing leaves is thrown
About its echoing chambers wide,
Till a morbid hate and horror have grown
Of a world in which I have hardly mixt,
And a morbid eating lichen fixt
On a heart half-turn'd to stone.

IX.

O heart of stone, are you flesh, and caught
By that you swore to withstand?
For what was it else within me wrought
But, I fear, the new strong wine of love,
That made my tongue so stammer and trip
When I saw the treasured splendour, her hand,
Come sliding out of her sacred glove,
And the sunlight broke from her lip?

X.

I have play'd with her when a child ;
She remembers it now we meet.
Ah well, well, well, I *may* be beguiled
By some coquettish deceit.
Yet, if she were not a cheat,
If Maud were all that she seem'd,
And her smile had all that I dream'd,
Then the world were not so bitter
But a smile could make it sweet,

VII.

I.

Did I hear it half in a doze
Long since, I know not where?
Did I dream it an hour ago,
When asleep in this arm-chair?

II.

Men were drinking together,
Drinking and talking of me;
“Well, if it prove a girl, the boy
Will have plenty: so let it be.”

III.

Is it an echo of something
Read with a boy's delight,
Viziers nodding together
In some Arabian night?

IV.

Strange, that I hear two men,
Somewhere, talking of me;
“Well, if it prove a girl, my boy
Will have plenty: so let it be.”

VIII.

She came to the village church,
And sat by a pillar alone ;
An angel watching an urn
Wept over her, carved in stone ;
And once, but once, she lifted her eyes,
And suddenly, sweetly, strangely blush'd
To find they were met by my own ;
And suddenly, sweetly, my heart beat stronger
And thicker, until I heard no longer
The snowy-banded, dilettante,
Delicate-handed priest intone ;
And thought, is it pride, and mused and sigh'd
“ No surely, now it cannot be pride.”



"DELICATE-HANDED PRIEST INTONE."

IX.

I was walking a mile,
More than a mile from the shore,
The sun look'd out with a smile
Betwixt the cloud and the moor,
And riding at set of day
Over the dark moor land,
Rapidly riding far away,
She waved to me with her hand.
There were two at her side,
Something flash'd in the sun,
Down by the hill I saw them ride
In a moment they were gone :
Like a sudden spark
Struck vainly in the night,
Then returns the dark
With no more hope of light.

X.

I.

Sick, am I sick of a jealous dread ?
Was not one of the two at her side
This new-made lord, whose splendour plucks
The slavish hat from the villager's head ?
Whose old grandfather has lately died,
Gone to a blacker pit, for whom
Grimy nakedness dragging his trucks
And laying his trams in a poison'd gloom
Wrought, till he crept from a gutted mine
Master of half a servile shire,
And left his coal all turn'd into gold
To a grandson, first of his noble line,
Rich in the grace all women desire,
Strong in the power that all men adore,
And simper and set their voices lower,
And soften as if to a girl, and hold
Awe-stricken breaths at a work divine,
Seeing his gewgaw castle shine,
New as his title, built last year,
There amid perky larches and pine,
And over the sullen-purple moor
(Look at it) pricking a cockney ear.



"THIS BROAD-BRIMM'D
HAWKER OF HOLY
THINGS."

II.

What, has he found my jewel out ?
For one of the two that rode at her
side

Bound for the Hall, I am sure was
he :

Bound for the Hall, and I think for
a bride.

Blithe would her brother's accept-
ance be.

Maud could be gracious too, no
doubt

To a lord, a captain, a padded shape.
A bought commission, a waxen face,
A rabbit mouth that is ever agape—
Bought ? what is it he cannot buy ?
And therefore splenetic, personal,
base,

A wounded thing with a rancorous cry,
At war with myself and a wretched race,
Sick, sick to the heart of life, am I.

III.

Last week came one to the county town,
To preach our poor little army down,
And play the game of the despot kings,
Tho' the state has done it and thrice as well :
This broad-brimm'd hawker of holy things,
Whose ear is cramm'd with his cotton, and rings
Even in dreams to the chink of his pence,
This huckster put down war ! can he tell

Whether war be a cause or a consequence ?
Put down the passions that make earth Hell !
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
Jealousy, down ! cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and fear ;
Down too, down at your own fireside,
With the evil tongue and the evil ear,
For each is at war with mankind.

IV.

I wish I could hear again
The chivalrous battle-song
That she warbled alone in her joy !
I might persuade myself then
She would not do herself this great wrong,
To take a wanton dissolute boy
For a man and leader of men.

V.

Ah God, for a man with heart, head, hand,
Like some of the simple great ones gone
For ever and ever by,
One still strong man in a blatant land,
Whatever they call him, what care I,
Aristocrat, democrat, autocrat — one
Who can rule and dare not lie.

VI.

And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be !

XI.

I.

O let the solid ground
Not fail beneath my feet
Before my life has found
What some have found so sweet ;
Then let come what come may,
What matter if I go mad,
I shall have had my day.

II.

Let the sweet heavens endure,
Not close and darken above me
Before I am quite quite sure
That there is one to love me ;
Then let come what come may
To a life that has been so sad,
I shall have had my day.

XII.

I.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
When twilight was falling,
Maud, Maud, Maud, Maud,
They were crying and calling.

II.

Where was Maud? in our wood ;
And I, who else, was with her,
Gathering woodland lilies,
Myriads blow together.

III.

Birds in our wood sang
Ringing thro' the valleys,
Maud is here, here, here
In among the lilies.

IV.

I kiss'd her slender hand,
She took the kiss sedately ;
Maud is not seventeen,
But she is tall and stately.



‘IN AMONG THE LILIES.’

V.

I to cry out on pride
Who have won her favour!
O Maud were sure of Heaven
If lowliness could save her.

VI.

I know the way she went
Home with her maiden posy,
For her feet have touch'd the meadows
And left the daisies rosy.

VII.

Birds in the high Hall-garden
Were crying and calling to her,
Where is Maud, Maud, Maud?
One is come to woo her.

VIII.

Look, a horse at the door,
And little King Charley snarling,
Go back, my lord, across the moor,
You are not her darling.

XIII.

I.

Scorn'd, to be scorn'd by one that I scorn,
Is that a matter to make me fret?
That a calamity hard to be borne?
Well, he may live to hate me yet.
Fool that I am to be vex't with his pride!
I past him, I was crossing his lands;
He stood on the path a little aside;
His face, as I grant, in spite of spite,
Has a broad-blown comeliness, red and white,
And six feet two, as I think, he stands;
But his essences turn'd the live air sick,
And barbarous opulence jewel thick
Sunn'd itself on his breast and his hands.

II.

Who shall call me ungentle, unfair,
I long'd so heartily then and there
To give him the grasp of fellowship;
But while I past he was humming an air,
Stopt, and then with a riding-whip
Leisurely tapping a glossy boot,
And curving a contumelious lip,
Gorgonised me from head to foot
With a stony British stare.

III.

Why sits he here in his father's chair ?
That old man never comes to his place :
Shall I believe him ashamed to be seen ?
For only once, in the village street,
Last year, I caught a glimpse of his face,
A gray old wolf and a lean.
Scarcely, now, would I call him a cheat ;
For then, perhaps, as a child of deceit,
She might by a true descent be untrue ;
And Maud is as true as Maud is sweet :
Tho' I fancy her sweetness only due
To the sweeter blood by the other side ;
Her mother has been a thing complete,
However she came to be so allied.
And fair without, faithful within,
Maud to him is nothing akin :
Some peculiar mystic grace
Made her only the child of her mother,
And heap'd the whole inherited sin
On that huge scapegoat of the race,
All, all upon the brother.

IV.

Peace, angry spirit, and let him be !
Has not his sister smiled on me ?

XIV.

I.

Maud has a garden of roses
And lilies fair on a lawn ;
There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower,
And thither I climbed at dawn
And stood by her garden-gate ;
A lion ramps at the top,
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

II.

Maud's own little oak-room
(Which Maud, like a precious stone
Set in the heart of the carven gloom,
Lights with herself, when alone
She sits by her music and books
And her brother lingers late
With a roystering company) looks
Upon Maud's own garden-gate :
And I thought as I stood, if a hand, as white
As ocean-foam in the moon, were laid
On the hasp of the window, and my Delight



"MAUD'S OWN LITTLE OAK-ROOM."

Had a sudden desire, like a glorious ghost, to glide,
Like a beam of the seventh Heaven, down to my side,
There were but a step to be made.

III.

The fancy flatter'd my mind,
And again seem'd overbold ;
Now I thought that she cared for me,
Now I thought she was kind
Only because she was cold.

IV.

I heard no sound where I stood
But the rivulet on from the lawn
Running down to my own dark wood ;
Or the voice of the long sea-wave as it swell'd
Now and then in the dim-gray dawn ;
But I look'd, and round, all round the house I beheld
The death-white curtain drawn ;
Felt a horror over me creep,
Prickle my skin and catch my breath,
Knew that the death-white curtain meant but sleep,
Yet I shudder'd and thought like a fool of the sleep
of death.

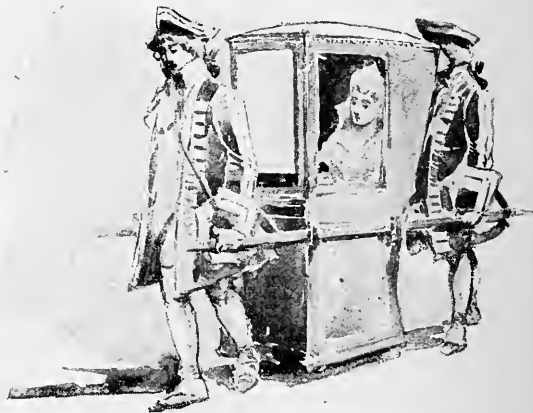
XV.

So dark a mind within me dwells,
And I make myself such evil cheer,
That if / be dear to some one else,
Then some one else may have much to fear ;
But if / be dear to some one else,
Then I should be to myself more dear.
Shall I not take care of all that I think,
Yea ev'n of wretched meat and drink,
If I be dear,
If I be dear to some one else.

XVI.

I.

This lump of earth has left his estate
The lighter by the loss of his weight;
And so that he find what he went to seek,



“O BEAUTIFUL CREATURE, WHAT AM I THAT I DARE TO
LOOK HER WAY.”

And fulsome Pleasure clog him, and drown
His heart in the gross mud-honey of town,
He may stay for a year who has gone for a week :

But this is the day when I must speak,
And I see my Oread coming down,
O this is the day !
O beautiful creature, what am I
That I dare to look her way ;
Think I may hold dominion sweet,
Lord of the pulse that is lord of her breast,
And dream of her beauty with tender dread,
From the delicate Arab arch of her feet
To the grace that, bright and light as the crest
Of a peacock, sits on her shining head,
And she knows it not : O, if she knew it,
To know her beauty might half undo it.
I know it the one bright thing to save
My yet young life in the wilds of Time,
Perhaps from madness, perhaps from crime,
Perhaps from a selfish grave.

II.

What, if she be fasten'd to this fool lord,
Dare I bid her abide by her word ?
Should I love her so well if she
Had given her word to a thing so low ?
Shall I love her as well if she
Can break her word were it even for me ?
I trust that it is not so.

III.

Catch not my breath, O clamorous heart,
Let not my tongue be a thrall to my eye,
For I must tell her before we part,
I must tell her, or die.

XVII.

Go not, happy day,
 From the shining fields,
Go not, happy day,
 Till the maiden yields.
Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth
When the happy Yes
 Falters from her lips,
Pass and blush the news
 Over glowing ships;
Over blowing seas,
 Over seas at rest,
Pass the happy news,
 Blush it thro' the West;
Till the red man dance
 By his red cedar-tree,
And the red man's babe
 Leap, beyond the sea,

Blush from West to East,
 Blush from East to West,
Till the West is East,
 Blush it thro' the West.
Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
-Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth.

XVIII.

I.

I have led her home, my love, my only friend.
 There is none like her,
 none.
 And never yet so warmly
 ran my blood
 And sweetly, on and on
 Calming itself to the long-
 wish'd-for end,
 Full to the banks, close
 on the promised good.

II.

None like her, none.
 Just now the dry-tongued
 laurels' pattering talk
 Seem'd her light foot
 along the garden walk,
 And shook my heart to
 think she comes once
 more;
 But even then I heard her
 close the door,
 The gates of Heaven are
 closed, and she is gone.

"I HAVE LED HER HOME, MY LOVE,
 MY ONLY FRIEND."



III.

There is none like her, none.
Nor will be when our summers have deceased.
O, art thou sighing for Lebanon
In the long breeze that streams to thy delicious
 East,
Sighing for Lebanon,
Dark cedar, tho' thy limbs have here increased,
Upon a pastoral slope as fair,
And looking to the South, and fed
With honey'd rain and delicate air,
And haunted by the starry head
Of her whose gentle will has changed my fate,
And made my life a perfumed altar-flame ;
And over whom thy darkness must have spread
With such delight as theirs of old, thy great
Forefathers of the thornless garden, there
Shadowing the snow-limb'd Eve from whom she
 came.

IV.

Here will I lie, while these long branches sway,
And you fair stars that crown a happy day
Go in and out as if at merry play,
Who am no more so all forlorn,
As when it seem'd far better to be born
To labour and the mattock-harden'd hand,
Than nursed at ease and brought to understand
A sad astrology, the boundless plan
That makes you tyrants in your iron skies,

Innumerable, pitiless, passionless eyes,
Cold fires, yet with power to burn and brand
His nothingness into man.

V.

But now shine on, and what care I,
Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
The countercharm of space and hollow sky,
And do accept my madness, and would die
To save from some slight shame one simple girl.

VI.

Would die ; for sullen-seeming Death may give
More life to Love than is or ever was
In our low world, where yet 'tis sweet to live.
Let no one ask me how it came to pass ;
It seems that I am happy, that to me
A livelier emerald twinkles in the grass,
A purer sapphire melts into the sea.

VII.

Not die ; but live a life of truest breath,
And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.
O, why should Love, like men in drinking-songs,
Spice his fair banquet with the dust of death ?
Make answer, Maud my bliss,
Maud made my Maud by that long, loving kiss,
Life of my life, wilt thou not answer this ?
"The dusky strand of Death inwoven here
With dear Love's tie, makes Love himself more
dear."

VIII.

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay ?
And hark the clock within, the silver knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white,
And died to live, long as my pulses play ;
But now by this my love has closed her sight
And given false death her hand, and stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell
Among the fragments of the golden day.
May nothing there her maiden grace affright !
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart, my ownest own, farewell ;
It is but for a little space I go :
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night !
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow
Of your soft splendours that you look so bright ?
I have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe
That seems to draw — but it shall not be so :
Let all be well, be well.

XIX.

I.

Her brother is coming back to-night,
Breaking up my dream of delight.



"HER BROTHER IS COMING BACK TO-NIGHT."

II.

My dream? do I dream of bliss?
I have walk'd awake with Truth.
O when did a morning shine
So rich in atonement as this
For my dark-dawning youth,
Darken'd watching a mother decline

And that dead man at her heart and mine :
For who was left to watch her but I?
Yet so did I let my freshness die.

III.

I trust that I did not talk
To gentle Maud in our walk
(For often in lonely wanderings
I have cursed him even to lifeless things)
But I trust that I did not talk,
Not touch on her father's sin :
I am sure I did but speak
Of my mother's faded cheek
When it slowly grew so thin,
That I felt she was slowly dying
Vext with lawyers and harass'd with debt :
For how often I caught her with eyes all wet,
Shaking her head at her son and sighing
A world of trouble within !

IV.

And Maud too, Maud was moved
To speak of the mother she loved
As one scarce less forlorn,
Dying abroad and it seems apart
From him who had ceased to share her heart,
And ever mourning over the feud,
The household Fury sprinkled with blood
By which our houses are torn :
How strange was what she said,
When only Maud and the brother

Hung over her dying bed —
That Maud's dark father and mine
Had bound us one to the other,
Betrothed us over their wine,
On the day when Maud was born ;
Seal'd her mine from her first sweet breath.
Mine, mine by a right, from birth till death.
Mine, mine — our fathers have sworn.

V.

But the true blood spilt had in it a heat
To dissolve the precious seal on a bond,
That, if left uncancell'd, had been so sweet :
And none of us thought of a something beyond,
A desire that awoke in the heart of the child,
As it were a duty done to the tomb,
To be friends for her sake, to be reconciled ;
And I was cursing them and my doom,
And letting a dangerous thought run wild
While often abroad in the fragrant gloom
Of foreign churches — I see her there
Bright English lily, breathing a prayer
To be friends, to be reconciled !

VI.

But then what a flint is he !
Abroad, at Florence, at Rome,
I find whenever she touch'd on me
This brother had laugh'd her down,
And at last, when each came home,
He had darken'd into a frown,

Chid her, and forbid her to speak
To me, her friend of the years before ;
And this was what had reddened her cheek
When I bow'd to her on the moor.

VII.

Yet Maud, altho' not blind
To the faults of his heart and mind,
I see she cannot but love him,
And says he is rough but kind,
And wishes me to approve him,
And tells me, when she lay
Sick once, with a fear of worse,
That he left his wine and horses and play,
Sat with her, read to her, night and day,
And tended her like a nurse.

VIII.

Kind? but the deathbed desire
Spurn'd by this heir of the liar —
Rough but kind? yet I know
He has plotted against me in this,
That he plots against me still.
Kind to Maud? that were not amiss.
Well, rough but kind; why let it be so :
For shall not Maud have her will?

IX.

For, Maud, so tender and true,
As long as my life endures
I feel I shall owe you a debt,

That I never can hope to pay ;
And if ever I should forget
That I owe this debt to you
And for your sweet sake to yours ;
O then, what then shall I say ? —
If ever I *should* forget,
May God make me more wretched
Than ever I have been yet !

X.

So now I have sworn to bury
All this dead body of hate,
I feel so free and so clear
By the loss of that dead weight,
That I should grow light-headed, I fear,
Fantastically merry ;
But that her brother comes, like a blight
On my fresh hope, to the Hall to-night.

XX.

I.

Strange, that I felt so gay,
Strange, that I tried to-day
To beguile her melan-
choly ;

The Sultan, as we name
him,—

She did not wish to blame
him —

But he vexed her and per-
plexed her

With his worldly talk and
folly :

Was it gentle to reprove
her

For stealing out of view
From a little lazy lover
Who but claims her as
his due ?

Or for chilling his caresses
By the coldness of her
manners,

Nay, the plainness of her
dresses ?



“THE SULTAN, AS WE NAME HIM.”

Now I know her but in two,
Nor can pronounce upon it
If one should ask me whether
The habit, hat, and feather,
Or the frock and gipsy bonnet
Be the neater and completer ;
For nothing can be sweeter
Than maiden Maud in either.

II.

But to-morrow, if we live,
Our ponderous squire will give
A grand political dinner
To half the squirelings near ;
And Maud will wear her jewels,
And the bird of prey will hover,
And the titmouse hope to win her
With his chirrup at her ear.

III.

A grand political dinner
To the men of many acres,
A gathering of the Tory,
A dinner and then a dance
For the maids and marriage-makers,
And every eye but mine will glance
At Maud in all her glory.

IV.

For I am not invited,
But, with the Sultan's pardon,

I am as well delighted,
For I know her own rose-garden,
And mean to linger in it
Till the dancing will be over ;
And then, oh then, come out to me
For a minute, but for a minute,
Come out to your own true lover,
That your true lover may see
Your glory also, and render
All homage to his own darling,
Queen Maud in all her splendour.



"QUEEN MAUD IN ALL HER SPLENDOUR."

XXI.

Rivulet crossing my ground,
And bringing me down from the Hall
This garden-rose that I found,
Forgetful of Maud and me,
And lost in trouble and moving round
Here at the head of a tinkling fall,
And trying to pass to the sea;
O Rivulet, born at the Hall,
My Maud has sent it by thee
(If I read her sweet will right)
On a blushing mission to me,
Saying in odour and colour, "Ah, be
Among the roses to-night."

XXII.

I.

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,



"I AM HERE AT THE GATE ALONE,"

Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone ;

And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.

II.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

III.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon ;
All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd
To the dancers dancing in tune ;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

IV.

I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone.
And half to the rising day ;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

V.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"For ever and ever, mine."

VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clash'd in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

VII.

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;

The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one ;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

X.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear ;
She is coming, my life, my fate ;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near ;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late ;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear ;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet ;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed ;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead ;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

PART II.

I.

I.

"THE fault was mine, the fault was mine." —
Why am I sitting here so stunn'd and still,



"AND HE STRUCK ME, MADMAN, OVER THE FACE."

Plucking the harmless wild-flower on the hill? —
It is this guilty hand! —

And there rises ever a passionate cry
From underneath in the darkening land —
What is it, that has been done?
O dawn of Eden bright over earth and sky,
The fires of Hell brake out of thy rising sun,
The fires of Hell and of Hate;
For she, sweet soul, had hardly spoken a word,
When her brother ran in his rage to the gate,
He came with the babe-faced lord;
Heap'd on her terms of disgrace,
And while she wept, and I strove to be cool,
He fiercely gave me the lie,
Till I with as fierce an anger spoke,
And he struck me, madman, over the face,
Struck me before the languid fool,
Who was gaping and grinning by:
Struck for himself an evil stroke;
Wrought for his house an irredeemable woe;
For front to front in an hour we stood,
And a million horrible bellowing echoes broke
From the red-ribb'd hollow behind the wood,
And thunder'd up into Heaven the Christless code,
That must have life for a blow.
Ever and ever afresh they seem'd to grow.
Was it he lay there with a fading eye?
"The fault was mine," he whisper'd, "fly!"
Then glided out of the joyous wood
The ghastly Wraith of one that I know;
And there rang on a sudden a passionate cry,
A cry for a brother's blood:
It will ring in my heart and my ears, till I die, till
I die.

Is it gone? my pulses beat —
What was it? a lying trick of the brain?
Yet I thought I saw her stand,
A shadow there at my feet,
High over the shadowy land.
It is gone ; and the heavens fall in a gentle rain,
When they should burst and drown with deluging
 storms
The feeble vassals of wine and anger and lust,
The little hearts that know not how to forgive :
Arise, my God, and strike, for we hold Thee just,
Strike dead the whole weak race of venomous
 worms,
That sting each other here in the dust ;
We are not worthy to live.

II.

I.

See what a lovely shell,
Small and pure as a pearl,
Lying close to my foot,
Frail, but a work divine,
Made so fairly well
With delicate spire and whorl,
How exquisitely minute,
A miracle of design !

II.

What is it? a learned man
Could give it a clumsy name.
Let him name it who can,
The beauty would be the same.

III.

The tiny cell is forlorn,
Void of the little living will
That made it stir on the shore.
Did he stand at the diamond door
Of his house in a rainbow frill?
Did he push, when he was uncurl'd,
A golden foot or a fairy horn
Thro' his dim water-world?

IV.

Slight, to be crush'd with a tap
Of my finger-nail on the sand,
Small, but a work divine,
Frail, but of force to withstand,
Year upon year, the shock
Of cataract seas that snap
The three-decker's oaken spine
Athwart the ledges of rock,
Here on the Breton strand !

V.

Breton, not Briton ; here
Like a shipwreck'd man on a coast
Of ancient fable and fear —
Plagued with a flitting to and fro,
A disease, a hard mechanic ghost
That never came from on high
Nor ever arose from below,
But only moves with the moving eye,
Flying along the land and the main —
Why should it look like Maud ?
Am I to be overawed
By what I cannot but know
Is a juggle born of the brain ?

VI.

Back from the Breton coast,
Sick of a nameless fear,
Back to the dark sea-line
• Looking, thinking of all I have lost ;

An old song vexes my ear ;
But that of Lamech is mine.

VII.

For years, a measureless ill,
For years, for ever, to part —



"LIKE A SHIPWRECK'D MAN ON A COAST,"

But she, she would love me still ;
And as long, O God, as she
Have a grain of love for me,
So long, no doubt, no doubt,
Shall I nurse in my dark heart,
However weary, a spark of will
Not to be trampled out.

VIII.

Strange, that the mind, when fraught
With a passion so intense
One would think that it well
Might drown all life in the eye,—
That it should, by being so overwrought,
Suddenly strike on a sharper sense
For a shell, or a flower, little things
Which else would have been past by !
And now I remember, I,
When he lay dying there,
I noticed one of his many rings
(For he had many, poor worm) and thought
It is his mother's hair.

IX.

Who knows if he be dead?
Whether I need have fled?
Am I guilty of blood?
However this may be,
Comfort her, comfort her, all things good,
While I am over the sea !
Let me and my passionate love go by,
But speak to her all things holy and high,
Whatever happen to me !
Me and my harmful love go by ;
But come to her waking, find her asleep,
Powers of the height, Powers of the deep,
And comfort her tho' I die.

III.

Courage, poor heart of stone !
I will not ask thee why
Thou canst not understand
That thou art left for ever alone ;
Courage, poor stupid heart of stone.—
Or if I ask thee why,
Care not thou to reply :
She is but dead, and the time is at hand
When thou shalt more than die.

IV.

I.

O that 'twere possible
After long grief and pain
To find the arms of my true love
Round me once again !

II.

When I was wont to meet her
In the silent woody places
By the home that gave me birth,
We stood tranced in long embraces
Mixt with kisses sweeter, sweeter
Than anything on earth.

III.

A shadow flits before me,
Not thou, but like to thee :
Ah Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved, that they might tell us
What and where they be.

IV.

It leads me forth at evening,
It lightly winds and steals



"WE STOOD TRANCED IN LONG EMBRACES."

In a cold white robe before me,
When all my spirit reels

At the shouts, the leagues of lights,
And the roaring of the wheels.

V.

Half the night I waste in sighs,
Half in dreams I sorrow after
The delight of early skies ;
In a wakeful doze I sorrow
For the hand, the lips, the eyes,
For the meeting of the morrow,
The delight of happy laughter,
The delight of low replies.

VI.

'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And a dewy splendour falls
On the little flower that clings
To the turrets and the walls ;
'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
And the light and shadow fleet ;
She is walking in the meadow,
And the woodland echo rings ;
In a moment we shall meet ;
She is singing in the meadow,
And the rivulet at her feet
Ripples on in light and shadow
To the ballad that she sings.

VII.

Do I hear her sing as of old,
My bird with the shining head,
My own dove with the tender eye?
But there rings on a sudden a passionate cry,
There is some one dying or dead,
And a sullen thunder is roll'd;
For a tumult shakes the city,
And I wake, my dream is fled;
In the shuddering dawn, behold,
Without knowledge, without pity,
By the curtains of my bed
That abiding phantom cold.

VIII.

Get thee hence, nor come again,
Mix not memory with doubt,
Pass, thou deathlike type of pain,
Pass and cease to move about!
'Tis the blot upon the brain
That *will* show itself without.

IX.

Then I rise, the eavedrops fall,
And the yellow vapours choke
The great city sounding wide;
The day comes, a dull red ball
Wrapt in drifts of lurid smoke
On the misty river-tide.

X.

Thro' the hubbub of the market
I steal, a wasted frame,
It crosses here, it crosses there,
Thro' all that crowd confused and loud,
The shadow still the same ;
And on my heavy eyelids
My anguish hangs like shame.

XI.

Alas for her that met me,
That heard me softly call,
Came glimmering thro' the laurels
At the quiet evenfall,
In the garden by the turrets
Of the old manorial hall.

XII.

Would the happy spirit descend,
From the realms of light and song,
In the chamber or the street,
As she looks among the blest,
Should I fear to greet my friend
Or to say "Forgive the wrong,"
Or to ask her, "Take me, sweet,
To the regions of thy rest"?

XIII.

But the broad light glares and beats,
And the shadow flits and fleets
And will not let me be ;
And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,



"AND I LOATHE THE SQUARES AND STREETS."

Hearts with no love for me :
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee.

V.

I.

Dead, long dead,
Long dead !
And my heart is a handful of dust,
And the wheels go over my head,
And my bones are shaken with pain,
For into a shallow grave they are thrust,
Only a yard beneath the street,
And the hoofs of the horses beat, beat,
The hoofs of the horses beat,
Beat into my scalp and my brain,
With never an end to the stream of passing feet,
Driving, hurrying, marrying, burying,
Clamour and rumble, and ringing and clatter,
And here beneath it is all as bad,
For I thought the dead had peace, but it is not so ;
To have no peace in the grave, is that not sad ?
But up and down and to and fro,
Ever about me the dead men go ;
And then to hear a dead man chatter
Is enough to drive one mad.

II.

Wretchedest age, since time began,
They cannot even bury a man ;

And tho' we paid our tithes in the days that are gone,
Not a bell was rung, not a prayer was read ;
It is that which makes us loud in the world of the
 dead ;
There is none that does his work, not one ;
A touch of their office might have sufficed,
But the churchmen fain would kill their church,
As the churches have kill'd their Christ.

III.

See, there is one of us sobbing,
No limit to his distress ;
And another, a lord of all things, praying
To his own great self, as I guess ;
And another, a statesman there, betraying
His party-secret, fool, to the press ;
And yonder a vile physician, blabbing
The case of his patient — all for what ?
To tickle the maggot born in an empty head,
And wheedle a world that loves him not,
For it is but a world of the dead.

IV.

Nothing but idiot gabble !
For the prophecy given of old
And then not understood,
Has come to pass as foretold ;
Not let any man think for the public good,
But babble, merely for babble.
For I never whisper'd a private affair
Within the hearing of cat or mouse,

No, not to myself in the closet alone,
But I heard it shouted at once from the top of the
house ;
Everything came to be known.
Who told *him* we were there ?

V.

Not that gray old wolf, for he came not back
From the wilderness, full of wolves, where he used
to lie ;
He has gather'd the bones for his o'ergrown whelp
to crack ;
Crack them now for yourself, and howl, and die.

VI.

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
And curse me the British vermin, the rat ;
I know not whether he came in the Hanover ship,
But I know that he lies and listens mute
In an ancient mansion's crannies and holes :
Arsenic, arsenic, sure, would do it,
Except that now we poison our babes, poor souls !
It is all used up for that.

VII.

Tell him now : she is standing here at my head ;
Not beautiful now, not even kind ;
Hemay take her now ; for she never speaks her mind,
But is ever the one thing silent here.
She is not *of* us, as I divine ;
She comes from another stiller world of the dead,
Stiller, not fairer than mine.

VIII.

But I know where a garden grows,
Fairer than aught in the world beside,
All made up of the lily and rose
That blow by night, when the season is good,
To the sound of dancing music and flutes :
It is only flowers, they had no fruits,
And I almost fear they are not roses, but blood ;
For the keeper was one, so full of pride,
He linkt a dead man there to a spectral bride ;
For he, if he had not been a Sultan of brutes,
Would he have that hole in his side ?

IX.

But what will the old man say ?
He laid a cruel snare in a pit
To catch a friend of mine one stormy day ;
Yet now I could even weep to think of it ;
For what will the old man say
When he comes to the second corpse in the pit ?

X.

Friend, to be struck by the public foe,
Then to strike him and lay him low,
That were a public merit, far,
Whatever the Quaker holds, from sin ;
But the red life spilt for a private blow—
I swear to you, lawful and lawless war
Are scarcely even akin.

XI.

O me, why have they not buried me deep enough?
Is it kind to have made me a grave so rough,
Me, that was never a quiet sleeper?
Maybe still I am but half-dead ;
Then I cannot be wholly dumb ;
I will cry to the steps above my head,
And somebody, surely, some kind heart will come
To bury me, bury me
Deeper, ever so little deeper.



PART III.

VI.

I.

My life has crept so long on a broken wing
Thro' cells of madness, haunts of horror and fear,
That I come to be grateful at last for a little thing :
My mood is changed, for it fell at a time of year
When the face of night is fair on the dewy downs,
And the shining daffodil dies, and the Charioteer
And starry Gemini hang like glorious crowns
Over Orion's grave low down in the west,
That like a silent lightning under the stars
She seem'd to divide in a dream from a band of the
 blest,

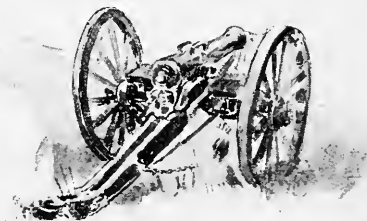
And spoke of a hope for the world in the coming
 wars —

“And in that hope, dear soul, let trouble have rest,
Knowing I tarry for thee,” and pointed to Mars
As he glow'd like a ruddy shield on the Lion's breast.

II.

And it was but a dream, yet it yielded a dear delight
To have look'd, tho' but in a dream, upon eyes so fair,
That had been in a weary world my one thing bright ;
And it was but a dream, yet it lighten'd my despair

When I thought that a war would arise in defence
of the right,
That an iron tyranny now should bend or cease,
The glory of manhood stand on his ancient height,
Nor Britain's one sole God be the millionaire :
No more shall commerce be all in all, and Peace
Pipe on her pastoral hillock a languid note,
And watch her harvest ripen, her herd increase,



“AND THE COBWEB WOV’N ACROSS THE CANNON’S THROAT.”

Nor the cannon-bullet rust on a slothful shore,
And the cobweb woven across the cannon’s throat
Shall shake its threaded tears in the wind no more.

III.

And as months ran on and rumour of battle grew,
“*It is time, it is time, O passionate heart,*” said I
(For I cleaved to a cause that I felt to be pure and
true),
“*It is time, O passionate heart and morbid eye,*
That old hysterical mock-disease should die.”

And I stood on a giant deck and mix'd my breath
With a loyal people shouting a battle cry,
Till I saw the dreary phantom arise and fly
Far into the North, and battle, and seas of death.

IV.

Let it go or stay, so I wake to the higher aims
Of a land that has lost for a little her lust of gold,
And love of a peace that was full of wrongs and shames
Horrible, hateful, monstrous, not to be told ;
And hail once more to the banner of battle unroll'd !
Tho' many a light shall darken, and many shall weep
For those that are crush'd in the clash of jarring
 claims,
Yet God's just wrath shall be wreak'd on a giant liar ;
And many a darkness into the light shall leap,
And shine in the sudden making of splendid names,
And noble thought be freër under the sun,
And the heart of a people beat with one desire ;
For the peace, that I deem'd no peace, is over and
 done,
And now by the side of the Black and the Baltic
 deep,
And deathful-grinning mouths of the fortress, flames
The blood-red blossom of war with a heart of fire.

V.

Let it flame or fade, and the war roll down like a
 wind,
We have proved we have hearts in a cause, we are
 noble still,

And myself have awaked, as it seems, to the better
mind ;
It is better to fight for the good than to rail at the
ill ;
I have felt with my native land, I am one with my
kind,
I embrace the purpose of God, and the doom
assign'd.



POEMS.



THE TALKING OAK.

ONCE more the gate behind me falls ;
Once more before my face
I see the moulder'd Abbey-walls,
That stand within the chace.

Beyond the lodge the city lies,
Beneath its drift of smoke ;
And ah ! with what delighted eyes
I turn to yonder oak.

For when my passion first began,
Ere that, which in me burn'd,
The love, that makes me thrice a man,
Could hope itself return'd ;

To yonder oak within the field
I spoke without restraint,
And with a larger faith appeal'd
Than Papist unto Saint.



"I SEE THE MOULDER'D ABBEY WALLS."

For oft I talk'd with
him apart,
And told him of
my choice,
Until he plagiarised
a heart,
And answer'd with
a voice.

Tho' what he whisper'd under Heaven

None else could understand ;

I found him garrulously given,

A babbler in the land.



“WOULD TWIST HIS GIRDLE TIGHT, AND PAT
THE GIRLS UPON THE CHEEK.”

But since I heard him make reply
Is many a weary hour ;
'Twere well to question him and try
If yet he keeps the power.

Hail, hidden to the knees in fern,
Broad Oak of Sumner-chace,
Whose topmost branches can discern
The roofs of Sumner-place !

Say thou, whereon I carved her name,
If ever maid or spouse,
As fair as my Olivia, came
To rest beneath thy boughs.—

“O Walter, I have shelter'd here
Whatever maiden grace
The good old Summers, year by year
Made ripe in Sumner-chace :

“Old Summers, when the monk was fat,
And, issuing shorn and sleek,
Would twist his girdle tight, and pat
The girls upon the cheek,

“Ere yet, in scorn of Peter's-pence,
And number'd bead, and shrift,
Bluff Harry broke into the spence
And turn'd the cowls adrift :

“And I have seen a score of those
Fresh faces, that would thrive
When his man-minded offset rose
To chase the deer at five ;

“And all that from the town would stroll,
Till that wild wind made work
In which the gloomy brewer's soul
Went by me, like a stork :

“The slight she-slips of loyal blood,
And others, passing praise,
Straight-laced, but all-too-full in bud
For puritanic stays :

“And I have shadow'd many a group
Of beauties, that were born
In teacup-times of hood and hoop,
Or while the patch was worn ;



"OR WHILE THE PATCH WAS WORN."

“ And, leg and arm with love-knots gay,
About me leap'd and laugh'd
The modish Cupid of the day,
And shrill'd his tinsel shaft.

“ I swear (and else may insects prick
Each leaf into a gall)
This girl for whom your heart is sick,
Is three times worth them all ;

“ For those and theirs, by Nature's law,
Have faded long ago ;
But in these latter springs I saw
Your own Olivia blow,

“ From when she gamboll'd on the greens
A baby-germ, to when
The maiden blossoms of her teens
Could number five from ten.

“ I swear, by leaf, and wind, and rain,
(And hear me with thine ears,)
That, tho' I circle in the grain
Five hundred rings of years —

“ Yet since I first could cast a shade,
Did never creature pass,
So slightly, musically made,
So light upon the grass :

“ For as to fairies that will flit,
To make the greensward fresh,
I hold them exquisitely knit,
But far too spare of flesh.”

Oh, hide thy knotted knees in fern,
And overlook the chace ;
And from thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place.

But thou, whereon I carved her name,
That oft has heard my vows,
Declare when last Olivia came
To sport beneath thy boughs.

“ O yesterday, you know the fair
Was holden at the town ;
Her father left his good arm-chair,
And rode his hunter down.

“ And with him Albert came on his.
I look'd at him with joy :
As cowslip unto oxlip is,
So seems she to the boy.

“ An hour had past — and, sitting straight
Within the low-wheel'd chaise,
Her mother trundled to the gate
Behind the dappled grays.

“ But as for her, she stay'd at home,
And on the roof she went
And down the way you use to come,
She look'd with discontent.

“ She left the novel half-uncut
Upon the rosewood shelf ;
She left the new piano shut :
She could not please herself.

“Then ran she, gamesome as the colt,
And livelier than a lark
She sent her voice thro' all the holt
Before her, and the park.

“A light wind chased her on the wing,
And in the chase grew wild,
As close as might be would he cling
About the darling child :

“But light as any wind that blows
So fleetly did she stir,
The flower, she touch'd on, dipt and rose,
And turn'd to look at her.

“And here she came, and round me play'd,
And sang to me the whole
Of those three stanzas that you made
About my 'giant bole ;'

“And in a fit of frolic mirth
She strove to span my waist :
Alas, I was so broad of girth,
I could not be embraced.

“I wish'd myself the fair young beech
That here beside me stands,
That round me, clasping each in each,
She might have lock'd her hands.

“Yet seem'd the pressure thrice as sweet
As woodbine's fragile hold,
Or when I feel about my feet
The berried briony fold.”

O muffle round thy knees with fern,
And shadow Sumner-chace !
Long may thy topmost branch discern
The roofs of Sumner-place !

But tell me, did she
read the name
I carved with many
vows
When last with
throbbing heart I
came
To rest beneath thy
boughs ?

“ O yes, she wan-
der'd round and
round

These knotted
knees of mine,
And found, and
kiss'd the name
she found,
And sweetly mur-
mur'd thine.



“ KISS'D THE NAME SHE FOUND.”

“ A teardrop trembled from its source,
And down my surface crept.
My sense of touch is something coarse,
But I believe she wept.

“Then flush'd her cheek with rosy light,
She glanced across the plain ;
But not a creature was in sight :
She kiss'd me once again.

“ Her kisses were so close and kind,
That, trust me on my word,
Hard wood I am, and wrinkled rind,
But yet my sap was stirr'd :

“ And even into my inmost ring
A pleasure I discern'd,
Like those blind motions of the Spring,
That show the year is turn'd.

“ Thrice-happy he that may caress
The ringlet's waving balm —
The cushions of whose touch may press
The maiden's tender palm.

“ I, rooted here among the groves
But languidly adjust
My vapid vegetable loves
With anthers and with dust :

“ For ah ! my friend, the days were brief
Whereof the poets talk,
When that, which breathes within the leaf,
Could slip its bark and walk.

“But could I, as in times foregone,
From spray, and branch, and stem,
Have suck'd and gather'd into one
The life that spreads in them,

“She had not found me so remiss ;
But lightly issuing thro',
I would have paid her kiss for kiss,
With usury thereto.”

O flourish high, with leafy towers,
And overlook the lea,
Pursue thy loves among the bowers
But leave thou mine to me.

O flourish, hidden deep in fern,
Old oak, I love thee well ;
A thousand thanks for what I learn
And what remains to tell.

“'Tis little more : the day was warm ;
At last, tired out with play,
She sank her head upon her arm
And at my feet she lay.

“Her eyelids dropp'd their silken eaves.
I breathed upon her eyes
Thro' all the summer of my leaves
A welcome mix'd with sighs.

“I took the swarming sound of life —
The music from the town —
The murmurs of the drum and fife
And lull'd them in my own.

“Sometimes I let a sunbeam slip,
To light her shaded eye ;
A second flutter'd round her lip
Like a golden butterfly ;

“A third would glimmer on her neck
To make the necklace shine ;
Another slid, a sunny fleck,
From head to ankle fine,

“Then close and dark my arms I spread,
And shadow'd all her rest —
Dropt dew upon her golden head,
An acorn in her breast,

“But in a pet she started up,
And pluck'd it out, and drew
My little oakling from the cup,
And flung him in the dew.

“And yet it was a graceful gift —
I felt a pang within
As when I see the woodman lift
His axe to slay my kin.

“ I shook him down because he was
The finest on the tree.
He lies beside thee on the grass.
O kiss him once for me.

“ O kiss him twice and thrice for me,
That have no lips to kiss,
For never yet was oak on lea
Shall grow so fair as this.”

Step deeper yet in herb and fern,
Look further thro’ the chace,
Spread upward till thy boughs discern
The front of Summer-place.

This fruit of thine by Love is blest,
That but a moment lay
Where fairer fruit of Love may rest
Some happy future day.

I kiss it twice, I kiss it thrice,
The warmth it thence shall win
To riper life may magnetise
The baby-oak within.

But thou, while kingdoms overset,
Or lapse from hand to hand,
Thy leaf shall never fail, nor yet
Thine acorn in the land.

May never saw dismember thee,
Nor wielded axe disjoint,
Thou art the fairest-spoken tree
From here to Lizard-point.

O rock upon thy towery-top
All throats that gurgle sweet !
All starry culmination drop
Balm-dews to bathe thy feet !

All gross of silky feather grow —
And while he sinks or swells
The full south-breeze around thee blow
The sound of minster bells.

The fat earth feed thy branchy root,
That under deeply strikes !
The northern morning o'er thee shoot,
High up, in silver spikes !

Nor ever lightning char thy grain,
But, rolling as in sleep,
Low thunders bring the mellow rain
That makes thee broad and deep !

And hear me swear a solemn oath,
That only by thy side
Will I to Olive plight my troth,
And gain her for my bride.

And when my marriage morn may fall,
She, Dryad-like, shall wear
Alternate leaf and acorn-ball
In wreath about her hair.

And I will work in prose and rhyme,
And praise thee more in both
Than bard has honour'd beech or lime,
Or that Thessalian growth,

In which the swarthy ringdove sat,
And mystic sentence spoke ;
And more than England honours that,
Thy famous brother-oak,

Wherein the younger Charles abode
Till all the paths were dim,
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And humm'd a surly hymn.



LOVE AND DUTY.

OF love that never found his earthly close,
What sequel? Streaming eyes and breaking hearts?
Or all the same as if he had not been?

Not so. Shall Error in the round of time
Still father Truth? O shall the braggart shout
For some blind glimpse of freedom work itself
Thro' madness, hated by the wise, to law
System and empire? Sin itself be found
The cloudy porch oft opening on the Sun?
And only he, this wonder, dead, become
Mere highway dust? or year by year alone
Sit brooding in the ruins of a life,
Nightmare of youth, the spectre of himself?

If this were thus, if this, indeed, were all,
Better the narrow brain, the stony heart,
The staring eye glazed o'er with sapless days,
The long mechanic pacings to and fro,
The set gray life, and apathetic end.
But am I not the nobler thro' thy love?
O three times less unworthy! likewise thou
Art more thro' Love, and greater than thy years,
The Sun will run his orbit, and the Moon
Her circle. Wait, and Love himself will bring
The drooping flower of knowledge changed to fruit
Of wisdom. Wait: my faith is large in Time,
And that which shapes it to some perfect end.

Will some one say, Then why not ill for good?
Why took ye not your pastime? To that man
My work shall answer, since I knew the right
And did it; for a man is not as God,
But then most Godlike being most a man.
— So let me think 'tis well for thee and me —
Ill-fated that I am, what lot is mine
Whose foresight preaches peace, my heart so slow
To feel it! For how hard it seem'd to me,
When eyes, love-languid thro' half tears would dwell
One earnest, earnest moment upon mine,
Then not to dare to see! when thy low voice,
Faltering, would break its syllables, to keep
My own full-tuned,—hold passion in a leash,
And not leap forth and fall about thy neck,
And on thy bosom (deep desired relief!)
Rain out the heavy mist of tears, that weigh'd
Upon my brain, my senses and my soul!

For Love himself took part against himself
To warn us off, and Duty loved of Love —
O this world's curse,—beloved but hated — came
Like Death betwixt thy dear embrace and mine,
And crying, "Who is this? behold thy bride,"
She push'd me from thee.

If the sense is hard

To alien ears, I did not speak to these —
No, not to thee, but to thyself in me :
Hard is my doom and thine : thou knowest it all.

Could Love part thus? was it not well to speak,
To have spoken once? It could not but be well.

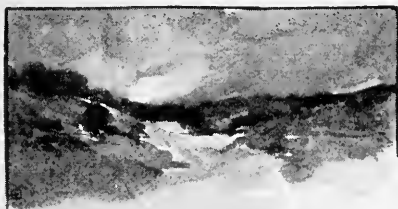
The slow sweet hours that bring us all things good,
The slow sad hours that bring us all things ill,
And all good things from evil, brought the night
• In which we sat together and alone,
And to the want, that hollow'd all the heart,
Gave utterance by the yearning of an eye,
That burn'd upon its object thro' such tears
As flow but once a life.

The trance gave way
To those caresses, when a hundred times
In that last kiss, which never was the last,
Farewell, like endless welcome, lived and died.
Then follow'd counsel, comfort, and the words
That make a man feel strong in speaking truth ;
Till now the dark was worn, and overhead
The lights of sunset and of sunrise mix'd
In that brief night ; the summer night, that paused
Among her stars to hear us ; stars that hung
Love-charm'd to listen : all the wheels of Time
Spun round in station, but the end had come.

O then like those, who clench their nerves to rush
Upon their dissolution, we two rose,
There — closing like an individual life —
In one blind cry of passion and of pain,
Like bitter accusation ev'n to death,
Caught up the whole of love and utter'd it,
And bade adieu for ever.

Live — yet live —
Shall sharpest pathos blight us, knowing all
Life needs for life is possible to will —
Live happy ; tend thy flowers ; be tended by

My blessing ! Should my Shadow cross thy thoughts
Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
For calmer hours to Memory's darkest hold,
If not to be forgotten — not at once —
Not all forgotten. Should it cross thy dreams,
O might it come like one that looks content,
With quiet eyes unfaithful to the truth,
And point thee forward to a distant light,
Or seem to lift a burthen from thy heart
And leave thee freër, till thou wake refresh'd
Then when the first low matin-chirp hath grown
Full quire, and morning driv'n her plow of pearl
Far furrowing into light the mounded rack,
Beyond the fair green field and eastern sea.



“MORNING DRIV N HER PLOW OF PEARL FAR FURROWING
INTO LIGHT THE MOUNDED RACK.”

THE GOLDEN YEAR.

WELL, you shall have that song which Leonard wrote :

It was last summer on a tour in Wales :
Old James was with me : we that day had been
Up Snowdon ; and I wish'd for Leonard there,
And found him in Llanberis : then we crost
Between the lakes, and clamber'd half way up
The counter side ; and that same song of his
He told me ; for I banter'd him, and swore
They said he lived shut up within himself,
A tongue-tied Poet in the feverous days,
That, setting the *how much* before the *how*,
Cry, like the daughters of the horseleech, " Give,
Cram us with all," but count not me the herd !

To which " They call me what they will," he said
" But I was born too late : the fair new forms,
That float about the threshold of an age,
Like truths of Science waiting to be caught —
Catch me who can, and make the catcher crown'd —
Are taken by the forelock. Let it be.
But if you care indeed to listen, hear
These measured words, my work of yesternorn."

" We sleep and wake and sleep, but all things
move ;
The Sun flies forward to his brother Sun ;

The dark Earth follows wheel'd in her ellipse ;
And human things returning on themselves
Move onward, leading up the golden year.

“ Ah, tho' the times, when some new thought
can bud,
Are but as poets' seasons when they flower,
Yet seas, that daily gain upon the shore,
Have ebb and flow conditioning their march,
And slow and sure comes up the golden year.

“ When wealth no more shall rest in mounded
heaps,
But smit with freer light shall slowly melt
In many streams to fatten lower lands,
And light shall spread, and man be liker man
Thro' all the season of the golden year.

“ Shall eagles not be eagles? wrens be wrens?
If all the world were falcons, what of that?
The wonder of the eagle were the less,
But he not less the eagle. Happy days
Roll onward, leading up the golden year.

“ Fly, happy happy sails, and bear the Press ;
Fly happy with the mission of the Cross ;
Knit land to land, and blowing havenward
With silks, and fruits, and spices, clear of toll,
Enrich the markets of the golden year.

“ But we grow old. Ah ! when shall all men's
good
Be each man's rule, and universal Peace

Lie like a shaft of light across the land,
And like a lane of beams athwart the sea,
Thro' all the circle of the golden year?"

Thus far he flow'd, and ended; whereupon
"Ah, folly!" in mimic cadence answer'd James —
"Ah, folly! for it lies so far away,
Not in our time, nor in our children's time,
'Tis like the second world to us that live;
'Twere all as one to fix our hopes on Heaven
As on this vision of the golden year."

With that he struck his staff against the rocks
And broke it,—James,—you know him,—old, but
full
Of force and choler, and firm upon his feet,
And like an oaken stock in winter woods,
O'erflourish'd with the hoary clematis:
Then added, all in heat:

"What stuff is this!

Old writers push'd the happy season back,—
The more fools they,—we forward: dreamers both:
You most, that in an age, when every hour
Must sweat her sixty minutes to the death,
Live on, God love us, as if the seedsman, rapt
Upon the teeming harvest, should not plunge
His hand unto the bag: but well I know
That into him who works, and feels he works,
This same grand year is ever at the doors."

He spoke; and, high above, I heard them blast
The steep slate-quarry, and the great echo flap
And buffet round the hills, from bluff to bluff.

ULYSSES.

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth among these barren crags,
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me

I cannot rest from travel : I will drink
Life to the lees : all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone ; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea : I am become a name ;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known ; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,
Myself not least, but honour'd of them all ;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met ;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use !
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains : but every hour is saved

From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things ; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle —
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port ; the vessel puffs her sail :
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought
with me —

That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads— you and I are old ;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil ;
Death closes all : but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks :
The long day wanes : the slow moon climbs : the
deep



"THE SLOW MOON CLIMBS : THE DEEP MOANS ROUND
WITH MANY VOICES."

Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite

The sounding furrows ; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down :
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides ; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven ; that which we are, we are ;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

TITHONUS.

THE woods decay, the woods decay and fall,
The vapours weep their burthen to the ground,



"THE WOODS DECAY AND FALL."

Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,
And after many a summer dies the swan.

Me only cruel immortality
Consumes : I wither slowly in thine arms,
Here at the quiet limit of the world,
A white-hair'd shadow roaming like a dream
The ever-silent spaces of the East,
Far-folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn.

Alas ! for this gray shadow, once a man —
So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
Who madest him thy chosen, that he seem'd
To his great heart none other than a God !
I ask'd thee, " Give me immortality."
Then didst thou grant mine asking with a smile,
Like wealthy men who care not how they give.
But thy strong Hours indignant work'd their wills
And beat me down and marr'd and wasted me,
And tho' they could not end me, left me maim'd
To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
Immortal age beside immortal youth,
And all I was, in ashes. Can thy love,
Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,
Close over us, the silver star, thy guide,
Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears
To hear me ? Let me go : take back thy gift :
Why should a man desire in any way
To vary from the kindly race of men,
Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance
Where all should pause, as is most meet for all ?

A soft air fans the cloud apart ; there comes
A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.
Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals

From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure,
And bosom beating with a heart renew'd.
Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the gloom,
Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,
Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team
Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise,
And shake the darkness from their loosen'd manes,
And beat the twilight into flakes of fire.

Lo ! ever thus thou growest beautiful
In silence, then before thine answer given
Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek.

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,
And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,
In days far-off, on that dark earth, be true ?
"The Gods themselves cannot recall their gifts."

Ay me ! ay me ! with what another heart
In days far-off, and with what other eyes
I used to watch — if I be he that watch'd —
The lucid outline forming round thee ; saw
The dim curls kindle into sunny rings ;
Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my blood
Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd all
Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,
Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm
With kisses balmier than half-opening buds
Of April, and could hear the lips that kiss'd
Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,
Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,
While Ilion like a mist rose into towers.

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East :
How can my nature longer mix with thine ?
Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet
Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam
Floats up from those dim fields about the homes
Of happy men that have the power to die,
And grassy barrows of the happier dead.
Release me, and restore me to the ground ;
Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave :
Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn ;
I earth in earth forget these empty courts,
And thee returning on thy silver wheels.

LOCKSLEY HALL.

COMRADES, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis
early morn :

Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon
the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the cur-
lews call,

Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over
Locksley Hall ;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the
sandy tracts,

And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I
went to rest,

Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the
West.

✓ Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising thro' the
mellow shade,

Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver
braid.

Here about the beach I wander'd, nourishing a
youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result
of Time ;

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land
reposed ;
When I clung to all the present for the promise
that it closed :

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could
see ;
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder
that would be. —

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the
robin's breast ;
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself an-
other crest ;

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the bur-
nish'd dove :
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to
thoughts of love.

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should
be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute ob-
servance hung.

And I said, "My
cousin, Amy,
speak, and speak
the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin,
all the current of
my being sets to
thee."



On her pallid
cheek and fore-
head came a
colour and a
light,
As I have seen the
rosy red flushing
in the northern
night.

"MY COUSIN AMY, SPEAK."

And she turn'd — her bosom shaken with a sudden
storm of sighs —
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel
eyes —

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should
do me wrong ;"
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin ?" weeping, "I
have loved thee long."

Love took up the glass of Time, and turn'd it in his
glowing hands ;
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden
sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the
chords with might ;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in
music out of sight.

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the
copses ring,
And her whisper throng'd my pulses with the fulness
of the Spring.

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the
stately ships,
And our spirits rush'd together at the touching of
the lips.

O my cousin, shallow-hearted ! O my Amy, mine
no more !
O the dreary, dreary moorland ! O the barren, bar-
ren shore !

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs
have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish
tongue !



"THOU ART MATED WITH A CLOWN."

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me —
to decline

On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart
than mine !

Yet it shall be : thou shalt lower to his level day by
day,

What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathy
with clay.

As the husband is, the wife is : thou art mated with
a clown,

And the grossness of his nature will have weight to
drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent
its novel force,

Something better than his dog, a little dearer than
his horse.

What is this? his eyes are heavy : think not they
are glazed with wine.

Go to him : it is thy duty : kiss him : take his hand
in thine.

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is over-
wrought :

Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with
thy lighter thought.

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand —

Better thou wert dead before me, tho' I slew thee
with my hand !

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's
disgrace,

Roll'd in one another's arms, and silent in a last
embrace.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the
strength of youth !

Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the
living truth !

Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest
Nature's rule !

Cursed be the gold that gilds the straiten'd forehead
of the fool !

Well — 'tis well that I should bluster ! — Hadst thou
less unworthy proved —

Would to God — for I had loved thee more than
ever wife was loved.

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears
but bitter fruit ?

I will pluck it from my bosom, tho' my heart be at
the root.

Never, tho' my mortal summers to such length of
years should come
As the many-winter'd crow that leads the clanging
rookery home.

Where is comfort ? in division of the records of the
mind ?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew
her, kind ?

I remember one that perish'd : sweetly did she
speak and move :
Such a one do I remember, whom to look at was to
love.

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the
love she bore ?
No — she never loved me truly : love is love for
evermore.

Comfort ? comfort scorn'd of devils ! this is truth
the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering
happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart
be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is
on the roof.

Like a dog he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring
at the wall,
Where the dying night-lamp flickers, and the shadows
rise and fall.

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his
drunken sleep,
To thy widow'd marriage-pillows, to the tears that
thou wilt weep.

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whisper'd by
the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of
thine ears;

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness
on thy pain.
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow : get thee to thy
rest again.

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace ; for a tender
voice will cry.
'Tis a purer life than thine ; a lip to drain thy trouble
dry.

Baby lips will laugh me down : my latest rival
brings thee rest.
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the
mother's breast.

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness
not his due.

Half is thine and half is his : it will be worthy of
the two.



O, I see thee old and formal,
fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims
preaching down a daughter's
heart.

“They were dangerous guides
the feelings — she herself was
not exempt —

Truly, she herself had suffer'd —
Perish in thy self-contempt !

Overlive it — lower yet — be
happy ! wherefore should I
care ?

I myself must mix with action,
lest I wither by despair.

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon
days like these ?

Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to
golden keys.

Every gate is throng'd with suitors, all the markets
overflow.

I have but an angry fancy ; what is that which I
should do ?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's
ground,
When the ranks are roll'd in vapour, and the winds
are laid with sound.

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that
Honour feels,
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each
other's heels.

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier
page.
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous
Mother-Age !

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before
the strife,
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult
of my life ;

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming
years would yield,
Eager hearted as a boy when first he leaves his
father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and
nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a
dreary dawn ;

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before
him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the
throngs of men :

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping
something new :
That which they have done but earnest of the things
that they shall do :



"LIGHT OF LONDON."

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could
see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder
that would be ;

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of
magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with
costly bales ;

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there
rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nation's airy navies grappling in the central blue ;

Far along the world-wide whisper of the south-wind
rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging thro'
the thunder-storm ;

Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the
battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the
world.

There the common sense of most shall hold a fret-
ful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal
law.

So I triumph'd ere my passion sweeping thro' me
left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the
jaundiced eye ;

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are
out of joint :
Science moves, but slowly slowly, creeping on from
point to point :

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping
nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly-
dying fire.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing pur-
pose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the
process of the suns.

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his
youthful joys,
Tho' the deep heart of existence beat for ever like
a boy's?

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger
on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more
and more.

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears
a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness
of his rest.

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the
bugle-horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for
their scorn :

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a mould-
er'd string?

I am shamed thro' all my nature to have loved so
slight a thing.

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's
pleasure, woman's pain —

Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a
shallower brain :

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions,
match'd with mine,

Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto
wine —

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing. Ah,
for some retreat

Deep in yonder shining Orient; where my life began
to beat ;

Where in wild Mahratta-battle fell my father evil-
starr'd ;—

I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's
ward.

Or to burst all links of habit — there to wander far
away,

On from island unto island at the gateways of the
day.

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and
happy skies,
Breathths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots
of Paradise.

Never comes the trader, never floats an European
flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the
trailer from the crag ;



"IN THE STEAMSHIP."

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the
heavy-fruited tree —
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres
of sea.

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in
this march of mind,
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts
that shake mankind.

There the passions cramp'd no longer shall have
scope and breathing space ;
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my
dusky race.

Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd,
they shall dive, and they
shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the
hair, and hurl their lances
in the sun ;

Whistle back the parrot's
call, and leap the rain-
bows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight
poring over miserable
books —

Fool, again the dream, the
fancy ! but I *know* my
words are wild,
But I count the gray bar-
barian lower than the
Christian child.

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glo-
rious gains,
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with
lower pains !



"I WILL TAKE SOME SAVAGE
WOMAN."

Mated with a squalid savage — what to me were sun
or clime ?

I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of
time —

I that rather held it better men should perish one
by one,

Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's
moon in Ajalon !

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, for-
ward let us range,

Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing
grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the
younger day :

Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

Mother-Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when
life begun :

Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the light-
nings, weigh the Sun.

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not
set.

Ancient founts of inspiration well thro' all my fancy
yet.

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall !

Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall.

Comes a vapour from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,

Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt.

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow ;

For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go.

GODIVA.

*I waited for the train at Coventry;
I hung with grooms and porters on the bridge,
To watch the three tall spires; and there I shaped
The city's ancient legend into this:—*

Not only we, the latest seed of Time,
New men, that in the flying of a wheel
Cry down the past, not only we, that prate
Of rights and wrongs, have loved the people well,
And loathed to see them overtax'd ; but she
Did more, and underwent, and overcame,
The woman of a thousand summers back,
Godiva, wife to that grim Earl, who ruled
In Coventry : for when he laid a tax
Upon his town, and all the mothers brought
Their children, clamouring, " If we pay, we starve !"
She sought her lord, and found him, where he
strode

About the hall, among his dogs, alone,
His beard a foot before him, and his hair
A yard behind. She told him of their tears,
And pray'd him, " If they pay this tax, they starve."
Whereat he stared, replying, half-amazed,
" You would not let your little finger ache
For such as *these* ?" — " But I would die," said she.
He laugh'd, and swore by Peter and by Paul :
Then fillip'd at the diamond in her ear ;

“ Oh ay, ay, ay, you talk !” — “ Alas !” she said,
“ But prove me what it is I would not do.”
And from a heart as rough as Esau’s hand,
He answer’d, “ Ride you naked thro’ the town,
And I repeal it ;” and nodding, as in scorn,
He parted, with great strides among his dogs.



“ AMONG HIS DOGS, ALONE.”

So left alone, the passions of her mind,
As winds from all the compass shift and blow,
Made war upon each other for an hour,

Till pity won. She sent a herald forth,
And bade him cry, with sound of trumpet, all
The hard condition ; but that she would loose
The people : therefore, as they loved her well,
From then till noon no foot should pace the street,
No eye look down, she passing ; but that all
Should keep within, door shut, and window barr'd.

Then fled she to her inmost bower, and there
Unclasp'd the wedded eagles of her belt,
The grim Earl's gift ; but ever at a breath
She linger'd, looking like a summer moon
Half-dipt in cloud : anon she shook her head,
And shower'd the rippled ringlets to her knee ;
Unclad herself in haste ; adown the stair
Stole on ; and, like a creeping sunbeam, slid
From pillar unto pillar, until she reach'd
The gateway ; there she found her palfrey trapt
In purple blazon'd with armorial gold.

Then she rode forth, clothed on with chastity :
The deep air listen'd round her as she rode,
And all the low wind hardly breathed for fear.
The little wide-mouth'd heads upon the spout
Had cunning eyes to see : the barking cur
Made her cheek flame : her palfrey's footfall shot
Light horrors thro' her pulses : the blind walls
Were full of chinks and holes ; and overhead
Fantastic gables, crowding, stared : but she
Not less thro' all bore up, till, last, she saw



"UNCLASP'D THE WEDDED EAGLES OF HER BELT."

The white-flower'd elder-thicket from the field
Gleam thro' the Gothic archway in the wall.

Then she rode back, clothed on with chastity :
And one low churl, compact of thankless earth,
The fatal byword of all years to come,
Boring a little auger-hole in fear,
Peep'd—but his eyes, before they had their will,
Were shrivell'd into darkness in his head,
And dropt before him. So the Powers, who wait
On noble deeds, cancell'd a sense misused ;
And she, that knew not, pass'd : and all at once,
With twelve great shocks of sound, the shameless
noon
Was clash'd and hammer'd from a hundred towers,
One after one : but even then she gain'd
Her bower ; whence reissuing, robed and crown'd,
To meet her lord, she took the tax away
And built herself an everlasting name.

THE DAY-DREAM.



PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :
A pleasant hour has passed away
While, dreaming on your damask cheek,
The dewy sister-eyelids lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
I went thro' many wayward moods
To see you dreaming — and, behind,
A summer crisp with shining woods.
And I too dream'd, until at last
Across my fancy, brooding warm,
The reflex of a legend past,
And loosely settled into form.
And would you have the thought I had,
And see the vision that I saw,
Then take the broidery-frame, and add
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
And I will tell it. Turn your face,
Nor look with that too-earnest eye —
The rhymes are dazzled from their place,
And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
Clothes and reclothes the happy plains,
Here rests the sap within the leaf,
Here stays the blood along the veins.
Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,
Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
Like hints and echoes of the world
To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
On every slanting terrace-lawn.
The fountain to his place returns
Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
Here droops the banner on the tower,
On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
The peacock in his laurel bower,
The parrot in his gilded wires.

III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs:
In these, in those the life is stay'd.
The mantles from the golden pegs
Droop sleepily : no sound is made,

Not even of a guat that sings.
More like a picture seemeth all
Than those old portraits of old kings,
That watch the sleepers from the wall.



"SOFT LUSTRE BATHES THE RANGE OF URNS."

IV.

Here sits the butler with a flask
Between his knees, half-drain'd ; and there
The wrinkled steward at his task,
The maid-of-honour blooming fair ;
The page has caught her hand in his :
Her lips are sever'd as to speak :
His own are pouted to a kiss :
The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
Make prisms in every carven glass,
And beaker brimm'd with noble wine.
Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
His state the king reposing keeps.
He must have been a jovial king.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
At distance like a little wood ;
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
And grapes with bunches red as blood ;
All creeping plants, a wall of green
Close-matted, bur and brake and briar,
And glimpsing over these, just seen,
High up, the topmost palace spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
And thought and time be born again,
And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
Bring truth that sways the soul of men ?
Here all things in their place remain,
As all were order'd, ages since.
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and Pain,
And bring the fated fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,
She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purple coverlet,
The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
On either side her tranced form
Forth streaming from a braid of pearl :
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Languidly ever ; and, amid
Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
Gloweth forth each softly-shadow'd arm
With bracelets of the diamond bright :
Her constant beauty doth inform
Stillness with love, and day with light.



" SHE SLEEPS "

III.

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard
In palace chambers far apart.
The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd
That lie upon her charmed heart.
She sleeps : on either hand upswells
The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest :
She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells
A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL.

I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late,
To those that seek them issue forth ;
For love in sequel works with fate,
And draws the veil from hidden worth.
He travels far from other skies —
His mantle glitters on the rocks —
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
And lighter-footed than the fox.

II.

The bodies and the bones of those
That strove in other days to pass,
Are wither'd in the thorny close
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
He gazes on the silent dead :
“ They perish'd in their daring deeds.”
This proverb flashes thro' his head,
“ The many fail : the one succeeds.”

III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks :
He breaks the hedge : he enters there :
The colour flies into his cheeks :
He trusts to light on something fair ;

For all his life the charm did talk
About his path, and hover near
With words of promise in his walk,
And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV.

More close and close his footsteps wind :
The Magic Music in his heart
Beats quick and quicker, till he find
The quiet chamber far apart.
His spirit flutters like a lark,
He stoops — to kiss her — on his knee.
“Love, if thy tresses be so dark,
How dark those hidden eyes must be !”

THE REVIVAL.

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss ! the charm was snapt.
There rose a noise of striking clocks,
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
And barking dogs, and crowing cocks ;
A fuller light illumined all,
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
The parrot scream'd, the peacock squall'd,
The maid and page renew'd their strife,
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and clackt,
And all the long-pent stream of life
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III.

And last with these the king awoke,
And in his chair himself uprear'd,
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and spoke,
" By holy rood, a royal beard !



"AND IN HIS CHAIR HIMSELF UPREAR'D."

How say you? we have slept, my lords.

My beard has grown into my lap."

The barons swore, with many words,

'Twas but an after-dinner's nap.

IV.

“Pardy,” return’d the king, “but still
My joints are somewhat stiff or so.
My lord, and shall we pass the bill
I mention’d half an hour ago?”
The chancellor, sedate and vain,
In courteous words return’d reply :
But dallied with his golden chain,
And, smiling, put the question by.

THE DEPARTURE.

I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
In that new world which is the old :
Across the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
The happy princess follow'd him.

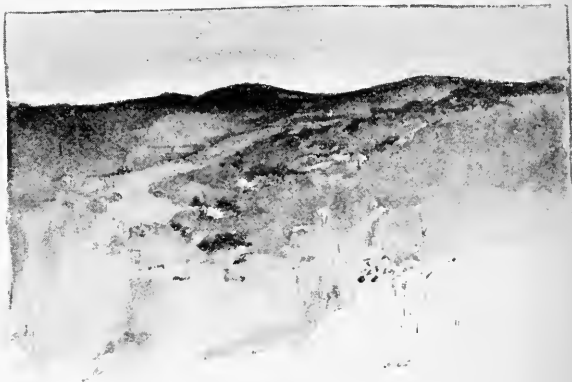
II.

" I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss ;"
" O wake for ever, love," she hears,
" O love, 'twas such as this and this."
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

III.

" O eyes long laid in happy sleep !"
" O happy sleep, that lightly fled !"
" O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep !"
" O love, thy kiss would wake the dead !"

And o'er them many a flowing range
Of vapour buoy'd the crescent-bark,
And, rapt thro' many a rosy change,
The twilight died into the dark.



“BEYOND THEIR UTMOST PURPLE RIM.”

IV.

‘A hundred summers ! can it be ?
And whither goest thou, tell me where ?’
‘O seek my father’s court with me,
For there are greater wonders there.’
And o’er the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
‘Thro’ all the world she follow’d him.

MORAL.

I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And if you find no moral there,
Go, look in any glass and say,
What moral is in being fair.
Oh, to what uses shall we put
The wildweed flower that simply blows?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose?

II.

But any man that walks the mead,
In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humours lead,
A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications lie
In Art like Nature, dearest friend;
So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

I.

You shake your head. A random string
Your finer female sense offends.
Well — were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends ;
To pass with all our social ties
To silence from the paths of men ;
And every hundred years to rise
And learn the world and sleep again ?
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
And wake on science grown to more,
On secrets of the brain, the stars,
As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
And all that else the years will show,
The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
The vast Republics that may grow,
The Federations and the Powers ;
Titanic forces taking birth
In divers seasons, divers climes,
For we are Ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times.

II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
Thro' sunny decads new and strange,
Or gay quinquenniads would we reap
The flower and quintessence of change.

III.

Ah, yet would I — and would I might !
So much your eyes my fancy take —
Be still the first to leap to light
That I might kiss those eyes awake !
For, am I right, or am I wrong,
To choose your own you did not care ;
You'd have *my* moral from the song,
And I will take my pleasure there :
And, am I right, or am I wrong,
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
To search a meaning for the song,
Perforce, will still revert to you ;
Nor finds a closer truth than this
All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
And evermore a costly kiss
The prelude to some brighter world.

IV.

For since the time when Adam first
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
And every bird of Eden burst
In carol, every bud to flower,

What eyes, like thine, have waken'd hopes,
What lips, like thine, so sweetly join'd?
Where on the double rosebud droops
The fulness of the pensive mind;
Which all too dearly self-involved,
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me;
A sleep by kisses undissolved,
That lets thee neither hear nor see:
But break it. In the name of wife,
And in the rights that name may give,
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
And that for which I care to live.

EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And, if you find a meaning there,



"WHAT WONDER, IF HE THINKS ME FAIR?"

O whisper to your glass, and say,
"What wonder, if he thinks me fair?"

What wonder I was all unwise,
To shape the song for your delight,
Like long-tail'd birds of Paradise
That float thro' Heaven, and cannot light ?
Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue —
But take it — earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

AMPHION.

My father left a park to me,
But it is wild and barren,
A garden too with scarce a tree,
And waster than a warren :
Yet say the neighbours when they call,
It is not bad but good land,
And in it is the germ of all
That grows within the woodland.

O had I lived when song was great
In days of old Amphion,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
Nor cared for seed or scion !
And had I lived when song was great,
And legs of trees were limber,
And ta'en my fiddle to the gate,
And fiddled in the timber !

'Tis said he had a tuneful tongue,
Such happy intonation,
Wherever he sat down and sung
He left a small plantation ;
Wherever in a lonely grove
He set up his forlorn pipes,
The gouty oak began to move,
And flounder into hornpipes.

The mountain stirr'd its bushy crown,
And, as tradition teaches,
Young ashes pirouetted down
Coquetting with young beeches;
And briony-vine and ivy-wreath
Ran forward to his rhyming,
And from the valleys underneath
Came little cosses climbing.

The linden broke her ranks and rent
The woodbine wreaths that bind her,
And down the middle, buzz ! she went
With all her bees behind her :
The poplars, in long order due,
With cypress promenaded,
The shock-head willows two and two
By rivers galloped.

Came wet-shod alder from the wave,
Came yews, a dismal coterie ;
Each pluck'd his one foot from the grave,
Poussetting with a sloe-tree :
Old elms came breaking from the vine,
The vine stream'd out to follow,
And, sweating rosin, plump'd the pine
From many a cloudy hollow.

And wasn't it a sight to see,
When, ere his song was ended,
Like some great landslip, tree by tree,
The country-side descended ;

And shepherds from the mountain-caves
Look'd down, half-pleased, half-frighten'd,
As dash'd about the drunken leaves
The random sunshine lighten'd !

Oh, nature first was fresh to men,
And wanton without measure ;
So youthful and so flexile then,
You moved her at your pleasure.
Twang out, my fiddle ! shake the twigs !
And make her dance attendance ;
Blow, flute, and stir the stiff-set sprigs,
And scirrhou roots and tendons.

'Tis vain ! in such a brassy age
I could not move a thistle ;
The very sparrows in the hedge
Scarce answer to my whistle ;
Or at the most, when three-parts sick
With strumming and with scraping,
A jackass heehaws from the rick,
The passive oxen gaping.

But what is that I hear ? a sound
Like sleepy counsel pleading ;
O Lord ! — 'tis in my neighbour's ground,
The modern Muses reading.
They read Botanic Treatises,
And Works on Gardening thro' there,
And Methods of transplanting trees
To look as if they grew there.

The wither'd Misses ! how they prose
O'er books of travell'd seamen,
And show you slips of all that grows
From England to Van Diemen.
They read in arbours clipt and cut,
And alleys, faded places,
By squares of tropic summer shut
And warm'd in crystal cases.

But these, tho' fed with careful dirt,
Are neither green nor sappy ;
Half-conscious of the garden-squirt,
The spindlings look unhappy.
Better to me the meanest weed
That blows upon its mountain,
The vilest herb that runs to seed
Beside its native fountain.

And I must work thro' months of toil,
And years of cultivation,
Upon my proper patch of soil
To grow my own plantation.
I'll take the showers as they fall,
I will not vex my bosom :
Enough if at the end of all
A little garden blossom. *

ST. AGNES' EVE.

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon :



DEEP ON THE CONVENT-ROOF THE SNOWS ARE SPARKLING TO THE MOON."

My breath to heaven like vapour goes :
May my soul follow soon !

The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord :
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
To yonder shining ground ;
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round ;
So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee ;
So in mine earthly house I am,
To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors ;
The flashes come and go ;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strows her lights below,

And deepens on and up ! the gates
Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
To make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity
One sabbath deep and wide —
A light upon the shining sea —
The Bridegroom with his bride !

SIR GALAHAD.

MY good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel ;
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall !
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall :
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill ;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns :
Then by some secret shrine I ride ;
I hear a voice, but none are there ;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark ;
I leap on board : no helmsman steers :
I float till all is dark.
A gentle sound, an awful light !
Three angels bear the holy Grail :
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.
Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !
My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail ;

But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
No branchy thicket shelter yields ;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.



"THE STREETS ARE DUMB WITH SNOW."

A maiden knight — to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear ;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams ;

And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear :
"O just and faithful knight of God !
Ride on ! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange ;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

EDWARD GRAY.

SWEET Emma Moreland of yonder town
Met me walking on yonder way,
“And have you lost your heart?” she said;
“And are you married yet, Edward Gray?”

Sweet Emma Moreland spoke to me :
Bitterly weeping I turn'd away :
“Sweet Emma Moreland, love no more
Can touch the heart of Edward Gray.

“Ellen Adair she loved me well,
Against her father's and mother's will :
To-day I sat for an hour and wept,
By Ellen's grave, on the windy hill.

“Shy she was, and I thought her cold ;
Thought her proud, and fled over the sea ;
Fill'd I was with folly and spite,
When Ellen Adair was dying for me.

“Cruel, cruel the words I said !
Cruelly came they back to-day :
'You're too slight and fickle,' I said,
'To trouble the heart of Edward Gray.'

“There I put my face in the grass—
Whisper’d, ‘Listen to my despair :
I repent me of all I did :
Speak a little, Ellen Adair !’

“Then I took a pencil, and wrote
On the mossy stone, as I lay,
‘Here lies the body of Ellen Adair ;
And here the heart of Edward Gray !’

“Love may come, and love may go,
And fly, like a bird, from tree to tree :
But I will love no more, no more,
Till Ellen Adair come back to me.

“Bitterly wept I over the stone :
Bitterly weeping I turn’d away :
There lies the body of Ellen Adair !
And there the heart of Edward Gray !”

WILL WATERPROOF'S LYRICAL
MONOLOGUE.

MADE AT THE COCK.

O PLUMP head-waiter at The Cock,
To which I most resort,



How goes the
time? 'Tis five
o'clock.

Go fetch a pint of
port :

But let it not be
such as that

You set before
chance-comers,

But such whose
father-grape
grew fat

On Lusitanian
summers.

No vain libation
to the Muse,

But may she still
be kind,

And whisper love-
ly words, and
use

Her influence on
the mind,

"O PLUMP HEAD-WAITER AT THE COCK."

To make me write my random rhymes,
Ere they be half-forgotten ;
Nor add and alter, many times,
Till all be ripe and rotten.

I pledge her, and she comes and dips
Her laurel in the wine,
And lays it thrice upon my lips,
These favour'd lips of mine ;
Until the charm have power to make
New life-blood warm the bosom,
And barren commonplaces break
In full and kindly blossom.

I pledge her silent at the board ;
Her gradual fingers steal
And touch upon the master-chord
Of all I felt and feel.
Old wishes, ghosts of broken plans,
And phantom hopes assemble ;
And that child's heart within the man's
Begins to move and tremble.

Thro' many an hour of summer suns,
By many pleasant ways, -
Against its fountain upward runs
The current of my days :
I kiss the lips I once have kiss'd ;
The gas-light wavers dimmer ;
And softly, thro' a vinous mist,
My college friendships glimmer.

I grow in worth, and wit, and sense,
Unboding critic-pen,
Or that eternal want of pence, .
Which vexes public men,
Who hold their hands to all, and cry
For that which all deny them —
Who sweep the crossings, wet or dry,
And all the world go by them.

Ah yet, tho' all the world forsake,
Tho' fortune clip my wings,
I will not cramp my heart, nor take
Half-views of men and things.
Let Whig and Tory stir their blood ;
There must be stormy weather ;
But for some true result of good
All parties work together.

Let there be thistles, there are grapes ;
If old things, there are new ;
Ten thousand broken lights and shapes,
Yet glimpses of the true.
Let raffs be rife in prose and rhyme,
We lack not rhymes and reasons,
As on this whirligig of Time
We circle with the seasons.

The earth is rich in man and maid ;
With fair horizons bound :
This whole wide earth of light and shade
Comes out a perfect round.

High over roaring Temple-bar,
And set in Heaven's third story,
I look at all things as they are,
But thro' a kind of glory.

Head-waiter, honour'd by the guest
Half-mused, or reeling ripe,
The pint you brought me, was the best
That ever came from pipe.
But tho' the port surpasses praise,
My nerves have dealt with stiffer.
Is there some magic in the place?
Or do my peptics differ?

For since I came to live and learn,
No pint of white or red
Had ever half the power to turn
This wheel within my head,
Which bears a season'd brain about,
Unsubject to confusion,
Tho' soak'd and saturate, out and out,
Thro' every convolution.

For I am of a numerous house,
With many kinsmen gay,
Where long and largely we carouse
As who shall say me nay :
Each month, a birth-day coming on,
We drink defying trouble,
Or sometimes two would meet in one,
And then we drank it double ;

Whether the vintage, yet unkept,
Had relish fiery-new,
Or elbow-deep in sawdust, slept,
As old as Waterloo ;



"WHERE LONG AND LARGELY WE CAROUSE."

Or stow'd, when classic Canning died,
In musty bins and chambers,
Had cast upon its crusty side
The gloom of ten Decembers.

The Muse, the jolly Muse, it is !
She answer'd to my call,
She changes with that mood or this,
In all-in-all to all :
She lit the spark within my throat,
To make my blood run quicker,
Used all her fiery will, and smote
Her life into the liquor.

And hence this halo lives about
The waiter's hands, that reach
To each his perfect pint of stout,
His proper chop to each.
He looks not like the common breed
That with the napkin dally ;
I think he came like Ganymede,
From some delightful valley.

The Cock was of a larger egg
Than modern poultry drop,
Stept forward on a firmer leg,
And cramm'd a plumper crop ;
Upon an ampler dunghill trod,
Crow'd lustier late and early,
Sipt wine from silver, praising God,
And raked in golden barley.

A private life was all his joy,
Till in a court he saw
A something-pottle-bodied boy
That knuckled at the taw :

He stoop'd and clutch'd him, fair and good,
Flew over roof and casement :
His brothers of the weather stood
Stock-still for sheer amazement.

But he, by farmstead, thorpe, and spire,
And follow'd with acclaims,
A sign to many a staring shire
Came crowing over Thames.
*Right down by smoky Paul's they bore,
Till, where the street grows straiter,
One fix'd for ever at the door,
And one became head-waiter.

But whither would my fancy go ?
How out of place she makes
The violet of a legend blow
Among the chops and steaks !
'Tis but a steward of the can,
One shade more plump than common ;
As just and mere a serving-man
As any born of woman.

I ranged too high : what draws me down
Into the common day ?
Is it the weight of that half-crown,
Which I shall have to pay ?
For, something duller than at first,
Nor wholly comfortable,
I sit, my empty glass reversed,
And thrumming on the table :

Half fearful that, with self at strife,
I take myself to task ;
Lest of the fulness of my life
I leave an empty flask :
For I had hope, by something rare,
To prove myself a poet :
But, while I plan and plan, my hair
Is gray before I know it.

So fares it since the years began,
Till they be gather'd up ;
The truth, that flies the flowing can,
Will haunt the vacant cup :
And others' follies teach us not,
Nor much their wisdom teaches ;
And most, of sterling worth, is what
Our own experience preaches.

Ah, let the rusty theme alone !
We know not what we know.
But for my pleasant hour, 'tis gone ;
'Tis gone, and let it go.
'Tis gone : a thousand such have slipt
Away from my embraces,
And fall'n into the dusty crypt
Of darken'd forms and faces.

Go, therefore, thou ! thy betters went
Long since, and came no more ;
With peals of genial clamour sent
From many a tavern-door,

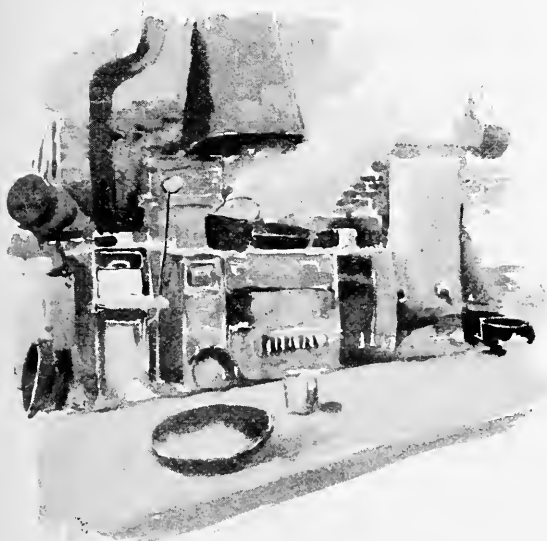
With twisted quirks and happy hits,
From misty men of letters ;
The tavern-hours of mighty wits —
Thine elders and thy betters.

Hours, when the Poet's words and looks
Had yet their native glow :
Nor yet the fear of little books
Had made him talk for show ;
But, all his vast heart sherris-warm'd,
He flash'd his random speeches,
Ere days, that deal in ana, swarm'd
His literary leeches.

So mix for ever with the past,
Like all good things on earth !
For should I prize thee, couldst thou last,
At half thy real worth ?
I hold it good, good things should pass :
With time I will not quarrel :
It is but yonder empty glass
That makes me maudlin-moral.

Head-waiter of the chop-house here,
To which I most resort,
I too must part : I hold thee dear
For this good pint of port.
For this, thou shalt from all things suck
Marrow of mirth and laughter ;
And wheresoe'er thou move, good luck
Shall fling her old shoe after.

But thou wilt never move from hence,
The sphere thy fate allots :
Thy latter days increased with pence
Go down among the pots :



"LARDED WITH THE STEAM OF THIRTY THOUSAND DINNERS."

Thou battenest by the greasy gleam
In haunts of hungry sinners,
Old boxes, larded with the steam
Of thirty thousand dinners,

We fret, we fume, would shift our skins,
Would quarrel with our lot ;
Thy care is, under polish'd tins,
To serve the hot-and-hot ;
To come and go, and come again,
Returning like the pewit,
And watch'd by silent gentlemen,
That trifle with the cruet.

Live long, ere from thy topmost head
The thick-set hazel dies ;
Long, ere the hateful crow shall tread
The corners of thine eyes :
Live long, nor feel in head or chest
Our changeful equinoxes,
Till mellow Death, like some late guest,
Shall call thee from the boxes.

But when he calls, and thou shalt cease
To pace the gritted floor,
And, laying down an unctuous lease
Of life, shall earn no more ;
No carved cross-bones, the types of Death,
Shall show thee past to Heaven :
But carved cross-pipes, and, underneath,
A pint-pot neatly graven.

LADY CLARE.

It was the time when lilies blow,
And clouds are highest up in air,
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.

I trow they did not part in scorn :
Lovers long-betroth'd were they :
They two will wed the morrow morn :
God's blessing on the day !

"He does not love me for my birth,
Nor for my lands so broad and fair ;
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well," said Lady Clare.

In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, "Who was this that went from thee?"
"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare,
"To-morrow he weds with me."

"O God be thank'd !" said Alice the nurse,
"That a'll comes round so just and fair :
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are *not* the Lady Clare."

"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse?"

Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"

"As God's above," said Alice the nurse,

"I speak the truth : you are my child.

"The old Earl's daughter died at my breast ;

I speak the truth, as I live by bread !

I buried her like my own sweet child,

And put my child in her stead."

"Falsely, falsely have ye done,

O mother," she said, "if this be true,

To keep the best man under the sun

So many years from his due."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,

"But keep the secret for your life,

And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,

When you are man and wife."

"If I'm a beggar born," she said,

"I will speak out, for I dare not lie.

Pull off, pull off, the brooch of gold,

And fling the diamond necklace by."

"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,

"But keep the secret all ye can."

She said, "Not so : but I will know

If there be any faith in man."

"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse,

"The man will cleave unto his right."

"And he shall have it," the lady replied,

"Tho' I should die to-night,"



"BUT KEEP THE SECRET FOR YOUR LIFE."

(185)

"Yet give one kiss to your mother dear!
Alas, my child, I sinn'd for thee "
"O mother, mother, mother," she said,
"So strange it seems to me.

"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,
And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go."

She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare :
She went by dale, and she went by down,
With a single rose in her hair.

The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought
Leapt up from where she lay,
Dropt her head in the maiden's hand,
And follow'd her all the way.

Down stept Lord Ronald from his tower :
"O Lady Clare, you shame your worth !
Why come you drest like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth ?"

"If I come drest like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are :
I am a beggar born," she said,
"And not the Lady Clare."

"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"For I am yours in word and in deed.
Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"Your riddle is hard to read."

O and proudly stood she up !

Her heart within her did not fail :
She look'd into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.

He laugh'd a laugh of merry scorn :

He turn'd and kiss'd her where she stood :
“If you are not the heiress born,
And I,” said he, “the next in blood —

“If you are not the heiress born,
And I,” said he, “the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare.”



THE CAPTAIN.

A LEGEND OF THE NAVY.

HE that only rules by terror
Doeth grievous wrong.
Deep as Hell I count his error.
Let him hear my song.
Brave the Captain was : the seamen
Made a gallant crew,
Gallant sons of English freemen,
Sailors bold and true.
But they hated his oppression,
Stern he was and rash ;
So for every light transgression
Doom'd them to the lash.
Day by day more harsh and cruel
Seem'd the Captain's mood.
Secret wrath like smother'd fuel
Burnt in each man's blood.
Yet he hoped to purchase glory,
Hoped to make the name
Of his vessel great in story,
Wheresoe'er he came.
So they past by capes and islands,
Many a harbour-mouth,
Sailing under palmy highlands
Far within the South.

On a day when they were going
O'er the lone expanse,
In the north, her canvas flowing,
Rose a ship of France.
Then the Captain's colour heighten'd,
Joyful came his speech :
But a cloudy gladness lighten'd
In the eyes of each.
"Chase," he said : the ship flew forward,
And the wind did blow ;
Stately, lightly, went she Norward,
Till she near'd the foe.
Then they look'd at him they hated,
Had what they desired :
Mute with folded arms they waited —
Not a gun was fired.
But they heard the foeman's thunder
Roaring out their doom ;
All the air was torn in sunder,
Crashing went the boom,
Spars were splinter'd, decks were shatter'd,
Bullets fell like rain ;
Over mast and deck were scatter'd
Blood and brains of men.
Spars were splinter'd ; decks were broken :
Every mother's son —
Down they dropt — no word was spoken —
Each beside his gun.
On the decks as they were lying,
Were their faces grim.
In their blood, as they lay dying,
Did they smile on him.

Those, in whom he had reliance
For his noble name,
With one smile of still defiance
Sold him unto shame.
Shame and wrath his heart confounded,
Pale he turn'd and red,
Till himself was deadly wounded
Falling on the dead.
Dismal error ! fearful slaughter !
Years have wander'd by,
Side by side beneath the water
Crew and Captain lie ;
There the sunlit ocean tosses
O'er them mouldering,
And the lonely seabird crosses
With one waft of the wing.

THE LORD OF BURLEIGH.

IN her ear he whispers gaily,
"If my heart by signs can tell,



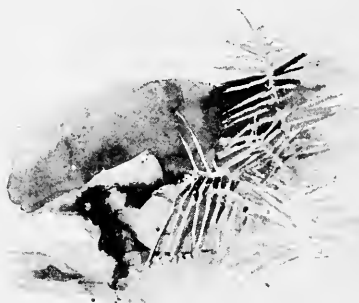
"AND A VILLAGE MAIDEN SHE."

Maiden, I have watch'd thee daily,
And I think thou lov'st me well."

She replies, in accents fainter,
 " 'There is none I love like thee.'"
He is but a landscape-painter,
 And a village maiden she.
He to lips, that fondly falter,
 Presses his without reproof,
Leads her to the village altar,
 And they leave her father's roof.
"I can make no marriage present :
 Little can I give my wife.
Love will make our cottage pleasant,
 And I love thee more than life."
They by parks and lodges going
 See the lordly castles stand :
Summer woods, about them blowing,
 Made a murmur in the land.
From deep thought himself he rouses,
 Says to her that loves him well,
"Let us see these handsome houses
 Where the wealthy nobles dwell."
So she goes by him attended,
 Hears him lovingly converse,
Sees whatever fair and splendid
 Lay betwixt his home and hers ;
Parks with oak and chestnut shady,
 Parks and order'd gardens great,
Ancient homes of lord and lady,
 Built for pleasure and for state.
All he shows her makes him dearer :
 Evermore she seems to gaze
On that cottage growing nearer,
 Where they twain will spend their days.

O but she will love him truly !
He shall have a cheerful home ;
She will order all things duly,
When beneath his roof they come.
Thus her heart rejoices greatly,
Till a gateway she discerns
With armorial bearings stately,
And beneath the gate she turns ;
Sees a mansion more majestic
Than all those she saw before :
Many a gallant gay domestic
Bows before him at the door.
And they speak in gentle murmur
When they answer to his call,
While he treads with footstep firmer,
Leading on from hall to hall.
And, while now she wonders blindly,
Nor the meaning can divine,
Proudly turns he round and kindly,
"All of this is mine and thine."
Here he lives in state and bounty,
Lord of Burleigh, fair and free,
Not a lord in all the county
Is so great a lord as he.
All at once the colour flushes
Her sweet face from brow to chin :
As it were with shame she blushes,
And her spirit changed within.
Then her countenance all over
Pale again as death did prove :
But he clasp'd her like a lover,
And he cheer'd her soul with love.

So she strove against her weakness,
Tho' at times her spirit sank :
Shaped her heart with woman's meekness
To all duties of her rank :
And a gentle consort made she,
And her gentle mind was such
That she grew a noble lady,
And the people loved her much,



" THEN BEFORE HER TIME SHE DIED,"

But a trouble weigh'd upon her,
And perplex'd her, night and morn,
With the burthen of an honour
Unto which she was not born.
Faint she grew, and ever fainter,
And she murmur'd, " Oh, that he
Were once more that landscape-painter,
Which did win my heart from me !"

So she droop'd and droop'd before him,
Fading slowly from his side :
Three fair children first she bore him,
Then before her time she died.
Weeping, weeping late and early,
Walking up and pacing down,
Deeply mourn'd the Lord of Burleigh,
Burleigh-house by Stamford-town.
And he came to look upon her,
And he look'd at her and said,
"Bring the dress and put it on her,
That she wore when she was wed."
Then her people, softly treading,
Bore to earth her body, drest
In the dress that she was wed in,
That her spirit might have rest.

THE VOYAGE.

I.

WE left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbour-mouth ;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fled to the South :
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore !
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore.

II.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail :
The Lady's-head upon the prow
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the gale.
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
And swept behind ; so quick the run,
We felt the good ship shake and reel,
We seem'd to sail into the Sun !

III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,
And burn the threshold of the night,
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !

How oft the purple-skirted robe
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
As thro' the slumber of the globe
Again we dash'd into the dawn !

IV.

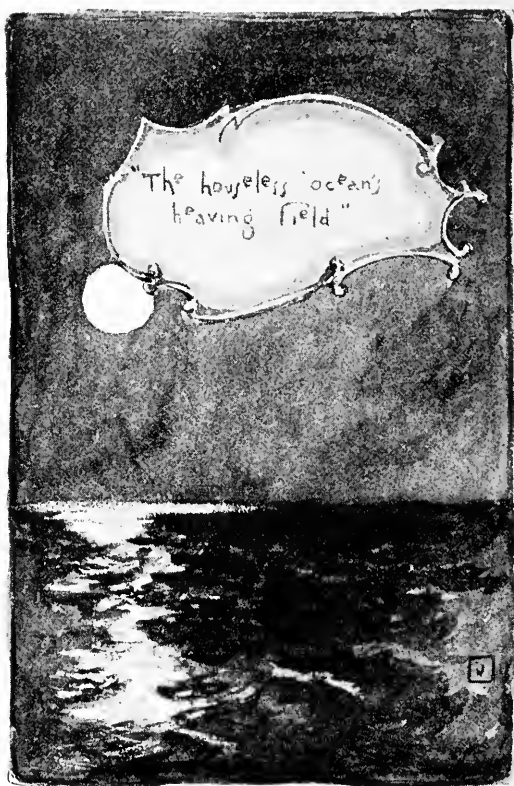
New stars all night above the brim
Of waters lighten'd into view ;
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
Changed every moment as we flew.
Far ran the naked moon across
The houseless ocean's heaving field,
Or flying shone, the silver boss
Of her own halo's dusky shield ;

V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
High towns on hills were dimly seen,
We past long lines of Northern capes
And dewy Northern meadows green.
We came to warmer waves, and deep
Across the boundless east we drove,
Where those long swells of breaker sweep
The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
Gloom'd the low coast and quivering brine
With ashy rains, that spreading made
Fantastic plume or sable pine ;



By sands and steaming flats, and floods
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;
At times a carven craft would shoot
From havens hid in fairy bowers,
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit,
But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
Down the waste waters day and night,
And still we follow'd where she led,
In hope to gain upon her flight.
Her face was evermore unseen,
And fixt upon the far sea-line ;
But each man marmur'd, " O my Queen,
I follow till I make thee mine."

IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
Like Fancy made of golden air,
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
Now high on waves that idly burst
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the sea,

And now, the bloodless point reversed,
She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us — him
We pleased not — he was seldom pleased :
He saw not far : his eyes were dim :
But ours he swore were all diseased.
“ A ship of fools,” he shriek’d in spite,
“ A ship of fools,” he sneer’d and wept.
And overboard one stormy night
He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was furl’d,
Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;
We lov’d the glories of the world,
And laws of nature were our scorn.
For blasts would rise and rave and cease,
But whence were those that drove the sail
Across the whirlwind’s heart of peace,
And to and thro’ the counter gale?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
For still we follow’d where she led :
Now mate is blind and captain lame,
And half the crew are sick or dead,
But, blind or lame or sick or sound,
We follow that which flies before :
We know the merry world is round,
And we may sail for evermore.

SIR LAUNCELOT AND QUEEN GUINEVERE.

A FRAGMENT.

LIKE souls that balance joy and pain,
With tears and smiles from heaven again
The maiden Spring upon the plain
Came in a sun-lit fall of rain.

 In crystal vapour everywhere
Blue isles of heaven laugh'd between,
And far, in forest-deeps unseen,
The topmost elm-tree gather'd green
 From draughts of balmy air.

Sometimes the linnet piped his song :
Sometimes the throstle whistled strong :
Sometimes the sparrowhawk, wheel'd along,
Hush'd all the groves from fear of wrong :

 By grassy capes with fuller sound
In curves the yellowing river ran,
And drooping chestnut-buds began
To spread into the perfect fan,
 Above the teeming ground.

Then, in the boyhood of the year,
Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere

Rode thro' the coverts of the deer,
With blissful treble ringing clear.
She seem'd a part of joyous Spring :



“IN CURVES THE YELLOWING RIVER RAN.”

A gown of grass-green silk she wore,
Buckled with golden clasps before ;
A light-green tuft of plumes she bore
Closed in a golden ring.

Now on some twisted ivy-net,
Now by some tinkling rivulet,
In mosses mixt with violet
Her cream-white mule his pastern set :

And fleeter now she skimm'd the plains
Than she whose elfin prancer springs
By night to eery warblings,
When all the glimmering moorland rings

With jingling bridle-reins.
As she fled fast thro' sun and shade,
The happy winds upon her play'd,
Blowing the ringlet from the braid :
She look'd so lovely as she sway'd

The rein with dainty finger-tips,
A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

A FAREWELL.

Flow down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver :
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river :
No where by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder tree,
And here thine aspen shiver ;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver ;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.



"IN ROBE AND CROWN THE KING STEPT DOWN."

THE BEGGAR MAID.

HER arms across her breast she laid ;
She was more fair than words can say :
Bare-footed came the beggar maid
Before the king Cophetua.
In robe and crown the king stepped down,
To meet and greet her on her way ;
“ It is no wonder,” said the lords,
“ She is more beautiful than day.”

As shines the moon in clouded skies,
She in her poor attire was seen :
One praised her ankles, one her eyes,
One her dark hair and lovesome mien.
So sweet a face, such angel grace,
In all that land had never been :
Cophetua sware a royal oath :
“ This beggar maid shall be my queen !”

THE EAGLE.

FRAGMENT.

HE clasps the crag with crooked hands ;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls ;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

“MOVE EASTWARD, HAPPY EARTH, AND
LEAVE.”

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
Yon orange sunset waning slow :
From fringes of the faded eve,
O, happy planet, eastward go ;
Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn,
And round again to happy night.

“COME NOT, WHEN I AM DEAD.”

COME not, when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover cry ;
But thou, go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest :
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where I lie :
Go by, go by.



THE LETTERS.

I.

STILL, on the tower stood the vane,
A black yew gloom'd the stagnant air,
I peer'd athwart the chancel pane
And saw the altar cold and bare.
A clog of lead was round my feet,
A band of pain across my brow ;
"Cold altar, Heaven and earth shall meet
Before you hear my marriage vow."

II.

I turn'd and humm'd a bitter song
That mock'd the wholesome human heart,
And then we met in wrath and wrong,
We met, but only meant to part.

Full cold my greeting was and dry ;
She faintly smiled, she hardly moved ;
I saw with half-unconscious eye
She wore the colours I approved.

III.

She took the little ivory chest,
With half a sigh she turn'd the key,
Then raised her head with lips coniprest,
And gave my letters back to me.
And gave the trinkets and the rings,
My gifts, when gifts of mine could please ;
As looks a father on the things
Of his dead son, I look'd on these.

IV.

She told me all her friends had said ;
I raged against the public liar ;
She talk'd as if her love were dead,
But in my words were seeds of fire.
"No more of love ; your sex is known :
I never will be twice deceived.
Henceforth I trust the man alone,
The woman cannot be believed.

V.

"Thro' slander, meanest spawn of Hell—
And women's slander is the worst,
And you, whom once I lov'd so well,
Thro' you, my life will be accurst."

I spoke with heart, and heat and force,
I shook her breast with vague alarms —
Like torrents from a mountain source
We rush'd into each other's arms.

VI.

We parted : sweetly gleam'd the stars,
And sweet the vapour-braided blue,
Low breezes fann'd the belfry bars,
As homeward by the church I drew.
The very graves appear'd to smile,
So fresh they rose in shadow'd swells ;
“ Dark porch,” I said, “ and silent aisle,
There comes a sound of marriage bells.”

THE VISION OF SIN.

I.

I HAD a vision when the night was late :
A youth came riding toward a palace-gate.
He rode a horse with wings, that would have flown,
But that his heavy rider kept him down.
And from the palace came a child of sin,
And took him by the curls, and led him in,
Where sat a company with heated eyes,
Expecting when a fountain should arise :
A sleepy light upon their brows and lips —
As when the sun, a crescent of eclipse,
Dreams over lake and lawn, and isles and capes —
Suffused them, sitting, lying, languid shapes,
By heaps of gourds, and skins of wine, and piles of
grapes.

II.

Then methought I heard a mellow sound,
Gathering up from all the lower ground ;
Narrowing in to where they sat assembled
Low voluptuous music winding trembled,
Wov'n in circles : they that heard it sigh'd,
Panted hand-in-hand with faces pale,
Swung themselves, and in low tones replied ;
Till the fountain spouted, showering wide
Sleet of diamond-drift and pearly hail ;

Then the music touch'd the gates and died ;
Rose again from where it seem'd to fail,
Storm'd in orbs of song, a growing gale ;
Till thronging in and in, to where they waited,
As 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale,
The strong tempestuous treble throb'd and palpi-
tated ;
Ran into its giddiest whirl of sound,
Caught the sparkles, and in circles,
Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes,
Flung the torrent rainbow round :
Then they started from their places,
Moved with violence, changed in hue,
Caught each other with wild grimaces,
Half-invisible to the view,
Wheeling with precipitate paces
To the melody, till they flew,
Hair, and eyes, and limbs, and faces,
Twisted hard in fierce embraces,
Like to Furies, like to Graces,
Dash'd together in blinding dew :
Till, kill'd with some luxurious agony,
The nerve-dissolving melody
Flutter'd headlong from the sky.

III.

And then I look'd up toward a mountain-tract,
That girt the region with high cliff and lawn :
I saw that every morning, far withdrawn
Beyond the darkness and the cataract,
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn,

Unheeded : and detaching, fold by fold,
From those still heights, and, slowly drawing near,
A vapour heavy, hueless, formless, cold,
Came floating on for many a month and year,
Unheeded : and I thought I would have spoken,
And warn'd that madman ere it grew too late :
But, as in dreams, I could not. Mine was broken,
When that cold vapour touch'd the palace gate,
And link'd again. I saw within my head
A gray and gap-tooth'd man as lean as death,
Who slowly rode across a wither'd heath,
And lighted at a ruin'd inn, and said :

IV.

“ Wrinkled ostler, grim and thin !
Here is custom come your way ;
Take my brute, and lead him in,
Stuff his ribs with mouldy hay.

“ Bitter barmaid, waning fast !
See that sheets are on my bed ;
What ! the flower of life is past :
It is long before you wed.

“ Slip-shod waiter, lank and sour
At the Dragon on the heath !
Let us have a quiet hour,
Let us hob-and-nob with Death.

“ I am old, but let me drink ;
Bring me spices, bring me wine ;
I remember, when I think,
That my youth was half divine.

“ Wine is good for shrivell’d lips,
When a blanket wraps the day,
When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamp’d in clay.

“ Sit thee down, and have no shame,
Cheek by jowl, and knee by knee :
What care I for any name ?
What for order or degree ?

“ Let me screw thee up a peg :
Let me loose thy tongue with wine :
Callest thou that thing a leg ?
Which is thinnest ? thine or mine ?

“ Thou shalt not be saved by works :
Thou hast been a sinner too :
Ruin’d trunks on wither’d forks,
Empty scarecrows, I and you !

“ Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn :
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

“ We are men of ruin’d blood ;
Therefore comes it we are wise.
Fish are we that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy flies.

“ Name and fame ! to fly sublime
Thro’ the courts, the camps, the schools,
Is to be the ball of Time,
Banded by the hands of fools.

“ Friendship ! — to be two
in one —
Let the canting liar pack !
Well I know, when I am
gone,
How she mouths behind
my back.

“ Virtue ! — to be good
and just —
Every heart, when sifted
well,
Is a clot of warmer dust,
Mix’d with cunningsparks
of hell.

“ O ! we two as well can
look
Whited thought and
cleanly life



“ AS THE PRIEST, ABOVE HIS BOOK.”

As the priest, above his book
Leering at his neighbour’s wife.

“ Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn :
Every moment dies a man,
Every moment one is born.

“ Drink, and let the parties rave :
They are fill'd with idle spleen ;
Rising, falling, like a wave,
For they know not what they mean.

“ He that roars for liberty
Faster binds a tyrant's power ;
And the tyrant's cruel glee
Forces on the freer hour.

“ Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up,
And is lightly laid again.

“ Greet her with applausive breath,
Freedom, gaily doth she tread ;
In her right a civic wreath,
In her left a human head.

“ No, I love not what is new ;
She is of an ancient house :
And I think we know the hue
Of that cap upon her brows.

“ Let her go ! her thirst she slakes
Where the bloody conduit runs,
Then her sweetest meal she makes
On the first-born of her sons.

“Drink to lofty hopes that cool —
Visions of a perfect State :
Drink we, last, the public fool,
Frantic love and frantic hate.

“Chant me now some wicked slave,
Till thy drooping courage rise,
And the glow-worm of the grave
Glimmer in thy rheumy eyes.

“Fear not thou to loose thy tongue ;
Set thy hoary fancies free ;
What is loathsome to the young
Savours well to thee and me.

“Change, reverting to the years,
When thy nerves could understand
What there is in loving tears,
And the warmth of hand in hand.

“Tell me tales of thy first love —
April hopes, the fools of chance ;
Till the graves begin to move,
And the dead begin to dance.

“Fill the can, and fill the cup :
All the windy ways of men
Are but dust that rises up
And is lightly laid again.

“Trooping from their mouldy dens
The chap-fallen circle spreads :
Welcome, fellow-citizens,
Hollow hearts and empty heads !

“You are bones, and what of that ?
Every face, however full,
Padded round with flesh and fat,
Is but modell'd on a skull.

“Death is king, and Vivat Rex !
Tread a measure on the stones,
Madam — if I know your sex,
From the fashion of your bones.

“No, I cannot praise the fire
In your eye — nor yet your lip :
All the more do I admire
Joints of cunning workmanship.

“Lo ! God's likeness — the ground-plan —
Neither modell'd, glazed, nor framed :
Buss me, thou rough sketch of man,
Far too naked to be shamed !

“Drink to Fortune, drink to Chance,
While we keep a little breath !
Drink to heavy Ignorance !
Hob-and-nob with brother Death !

“Thou art mazed, the night is long,
And the longer night is near :
What ! I am not all as wrong
As a bitter jest is dear.

“Youthful hopes, by scores, to all,
When the locks are crisp and curl'd ;
Unto me my maudlin gall
And my mockeries of the world.

“Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Mingle madness, mingle scorn !
Dregs of life, and lees of man :
Yet we will not die forlorn.”

v.

The voice grew faint : there came a further change :
Once more uprose the mystic mountain-range :
Below were men and horses pierced with worms,
And slowly quickening into lower forms ;
By shards and scurf of salt, and scum of dross,
Old splash of rains, and refuse patch'd with moss.
Then some one spake : “Behold ! it was a crime
Of sense avenged by sense that wore with time.”
Another said : “The crime of sense became
The crime of malice, and is equal blame.”

And one : " He had not wholly quench'd his power ;
A little grain of conscience made him sour."
At last I heard a voice upon the slope
Cry to the summit, " Is there any hope ?"
To which an answer peal'd from that high land,
But in a tongue no man could understand ;
And on the glimmering limit far withdrawn
God made Himself an awful rose of dawn.



TO —,

AFTER READING A LIFE AND LETTERS.

“Cursed be he that moves my bones.”

Shakespeare's Epitaph.

You might have won the Poet's name,
If such be worth the winning now,
And gain'd a laurel for your brow
Of sounder leaf than I can claim ;

But you have made the wiser choice,
A life that moves to gracious ends
Thro' troops of unrecording friends,
A deedful life, a silent voice :

And you have miss'd the irreverent doom
Of those that wear the Poet's crown :
Hereafter, neither knave nor clown
Shall hold their orgies at your tomb.

For now the Poet cannot die,
Nor leave his music as of old,
But round him ere he scarce be cold
Begins the scandal and the cry :

“Proclaim the faults he would not show :
Break lock and seal : betray the trust :
Keep nothing sacred : 'tis but just
The many-headed beast should know.”

Ah shameless ! for he did but sing
A song that pleased us from its worth ;
No public life was his on earth,
No blazon'd statesman he, nor king.

He gave the people of his best :
His worst he kept, the best he gave.
My Shakespeare's curse on clown and knave
Who will not let his ashes rest !

Who make it seem more sweet to be
The little life of bank and brier,
The bird that pipes his lone desire
And dies unheard within his tree,

Than he that warbles long and loud
And drops at Glory's temple-gates,
For whom the carrion vulture waits
To tear his heart before the crowd !

TO E. L., ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE.

ILLYRIAN woodlands, echoing falls
Of water, sheets of summer glass,
The long divine Peneïan pass,
The vast Akrokeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
With such a pencil, such a pen,
You shadow forth to distant men,
I read and felt that I was there :

And trust me while I turn'd the page,
And track'd you still on classic ground,
I grew in gladness till I found
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
And glisten'd — here and there alone
The broad-limb'd Gods at random thrown
By fountain-urns ; — and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
Of cavern pillars ; on the swell
The silver lily heaved and fell ;
And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him that on the mountain lea
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks
To him who sat upon the rocks,
And fluted to the morning sea.



BREAK, BREAK, BREAK.”

BREAK, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play !
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay !

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill ;
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still !

Break, break, break
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea !
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

THE POET'S SONG.

THE rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
He pass'd by the town and out of the street,
A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,
And waves of shadow went over the wheat,
And he sat him down in a lonely place,
And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild-swan pause in her cloud,
And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,
The snake slipt under a spray,
The wild hawk stood with the down on his beak,
And stared, with his foot on the prey,
And the nightingale thought, "I have sung many
songs,
But never a one so gay.
For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away."

THE BROOK.

HERE, by this brook, we parted ; I to the East
And he for Italy — too late — too late :
One whom the strong sons of the world despise ;
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,
And mellow metres more than cent for cent ;
Nor could he understand how money breeds,
Thought it a dead thing ; yet himself could make
The thing that is not as the thing that is.
O had he lived ! In our schoolbooks we say,
Of those that held their heads above the crowd,
They flourish'd then or then ; but life in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
And nothing perfect : yet the brook he loved,
For which, in branding summers of Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry air
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose fancies of the boy,
To me that loved him ; for " O brook," he says,
" O babbling brook," says Edmund in his rhyme,
" Whence come you ?" and the brook, why not?
replies.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

“Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
It has more ivy; there the river; and there
Stands Philip's farm, where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

“But Philip chatter’d more than brook or bird ;
Old Philip ; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow’d grigs that leap in summer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling.

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

“O darling Katie Willows, his one child !
A maiden of our century, yet most meek ;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse ;
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand ;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

“Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart with her.

For here I came, twenty years back — the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund; crost
By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry — crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push'd at Philip's garden-gate. The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding hinge,
Stuck; and he clamour'd from a casement, 'Run'
To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
'Run, Katie!' Katie never ran: she moved
To meet me, winding under woodbine bowers,
A little flutter'd, with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

"What was it? less of sentiment than sense
Had Katie; not illiterate; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouthed philanthropies,
Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

"She told me. She and James had quarrell'd.
Why?

What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;
James had no cause: but when I prest the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering jealousies
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James? I said.
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from mine,
And sketching with her slender pointed foot
Some figure like a wizard pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd
If James were coming. 'Coming every day,'



"BY THAT OLD BRIDGE WHICH, HALF IN RUINS THEN."

She answer'd, 'ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke him short ;
And James departed vext with him and her.'
How could I help her ? 'Would I — was it wrong ?'
(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke)
'O would I take her father for one hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to me !'
And even while she spoke, I saw where James
Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

“O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake !
For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm : full willingly he rose :
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes
Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.
He praised his land, his horses, his machines ;
He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his dogs ;
He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-hens ;
His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
Approved him, bowing at their own deserts :
Then from the plaintive mother's teat he took
Her blind and shuddering puppies, naming each,
And naming those, his friends, for whom they were :
Then crost the common into Darnley chase
To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and fern
Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
He pointed out a pasturing-colt, and said

'That was the four-year-old I sold the Squire.'
And there he told a long long-winded tale
Of how the Squire had seen the colt at grass,
And how it was the thing his daughter wish'd,
And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
To learn the price, and what the price he ask'd,
And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He gave them line: and five days after that
He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
Who then and there had offer'd something more,
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;
He knew the man; the colt would fetch its price;
He gave them line: and how by chance at last
(It might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)
He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him in,
And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,
Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

"Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,
Poor fellow, could he help it? recommenced,
And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho,
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt,
Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
And with me Philip, talking still; and so
We turn'd our foreheads from the falling sun,
And following our own shadows thrice as long
As when they follow'd us from Philip's door,

Arrived, and found the sun of sweet content
Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel-covers ;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows ;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses,
I linger by my shingly bars ;
I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go ; and these are gone,
All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps,
Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi ; sleeps in peace : and he,
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb :
I scraped the lichen from it : Katie walks
By the long wash of Australasian seas
Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
And breathes in converse seasons, " All are gone."

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a stile
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind



"SEATED ON A STILE IN THE LONG HEDGE."

Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook
A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low breath

Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings;
And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,
Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared
On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within:
Then, wondering, ask'd her "Are you from the
farm?"

"Yes," answer'd she. "Pray stay a little: pardon
me;

What do they call you?" "Katie." "That were
strange.

What surname?" "Willows." "No!" "That
is my name."

"Indeed!" and here he look'd so self-perplexed,
That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he
Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his dream.
Then looking at her; "Too happy, fresh and fair,
Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,
To be the ghost of one who bore your name
About these meadows, twenty years ago."

"Have you not heard?" said Katie, "we came
back.

We bought the farm we tenanted before.
Am I so like her? so they said on board.
Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
My mother, as it seems you did, the days
That most she loves to talk of, come with me.
My brother James is in the harvest-field:
But she — you will be welcome — O, come in!"

AYLMER'S FIELD.

1793.

DUST are our frames; and, gilded dust, our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and sound;
Like that long-buried body of the king,
Found lying with his urns and ornaments,
Which at a touch of light, an air of heaven,
Slipt into ashes, and was found no more.

Here is a story which in rougher shape
Came from a grizzled cripple, whom I saw
Sunning himself in a waste field alone —
Old, and a mine of memories — who had served,
Long since, a bygone Rector of the place,
And been himself a part of what he told.

SIR AYLMEY AYLMEY, that almighty man,
The county God — in whose capacious hall,
Hung with a hundred shields, the family tree
Sprang from the midriff of a prostrate king —
Whose blazing wyvern weathercock'd the spire,
Stood from his walls and wing'd his entry-gates
And swang besides on many a windy sign —
Whose eyes from under a pyramidal head
Saw from his windows nothing save his own —
What lovelier of his own had he than her,

His only child, his Edith, whom he loved
As heiress and not heir regretfully?
But "he that marries her marries her name,"
This fiat somewhat soothed himself and wife,



' A GRIZZLED CRIPPLE, SUNNING HIMSELF IN A WASTE
FIELD.'

His wife a faded beauty of the Baths,
Insidious as the Queen upon a card;
Her all of thought and bearing hardly more
Than his own shadow in a sickly sun.

A land of hops and poppy-mingled corn,
Little about it stirring save a brook !
A sleepy land, where under the same wheel
The same old rut would deepen year by year ;
Where almost all the village had one name ;
Where Aylmer followed Aylmer at the Hall
And Averill Averill at the Rectory
Thrice over ; so that Rectory and Hall,
Bound in an immemorial intimacy,
Were open to each other ; tho' to dream
That Love could bind them closer well had made
The hoar hair of the Baronet bristle up
With horror, worse than had he heard his priest
Preach an inverted scripture, sons of men,
Daughters of God ; so sleepy was the land.

And might not Averill, had he will'd it so,
Somewhere beneath his own low range of roofs,
Have also set his many-shielded tree ?
There was an Aylmer-Averill marriage once.
When the red rose was redder than itself,
And York's white rose as red as Lancaster's,
With wounded peace which each had prick'd to
death.

“ Not proven,” Averill said, or laughingly
“ Some other race of Averill's ” — prov'n or no,
What cared he ? what, if other or the same ?
He lean'd not on his fathers but himself.
But Leolin, his brother, living oft
With Averill, and a year or two before
Call'd to the bar, but ever call'd away
By one low voice to one dear neighbourhood, .

Would often in his walks with Edith, claim
A distant kinship to the gracious blood
That shook the heart of Edith hearing him.

Sanguine he was : a but less vivid hue
Than of that islet in the chestnut bloom
Flam'd in his cheek ; and eager eyes, that still
Took joyful note of all things joyful, beam'd
Beneath a manelike mass of rolling gold,
Their best and brightest, when they dwelt on hers,
Edith, whose pensive beauty, perfect else,
But subject to the season or the mood,
Shone like a mystic star between the less
And greater glory varying to and fro,
We know not wherefore ; bounteously made,
And yet so finely, that a troublous touch
Thinn'd, or would seem to thin her in a day,
A joyous to dilate, as toward the light.
And these had been together from the first.
Leolin's first nurse was, five years after, hers :
So much the boy foreran ; but when his date
Doubled her own, for want of playmates, he
(Since Averill was a decad and a half
His elder, and their parents underground)
Had tost his ball and flown his kite, and roll'd
His hoop to pleasure Edith, with her dipt
Against the rush of the air in the prone swing,
Made blossom-ball or daisy-chain, arranged
Her garden, sow'd her name and kept it green
In living letters, told her fairy-tales,
Show'd her the fairy footings on the grass,
The little dells of cowslips, fairy palms,

The petty marestail forest, fairy pines,
Or from the tiny pitted target blew
What look'd a flight of fairy arrows aim'd



"ARRANGED HER GARDEN."

All at one mark, all hitting : make-believes
For Edith and himself : or else he forged,
But that was later, boyish histories

Of battle, bold adventure, dungeon, wreck,
Flights, terrors, sudden rescues, and true love
Crown'd after trial ; sketches rude and faint,
But where a passion yet unborn perhaps
Lay hidden as the music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale.
And thus together, save for college-times
Or Temple-eaten terms, a couple, fair
As ever painter painted, poet sang,
Or Heaven in lavish bounty moulded, grew.
And more and more, the maiden woman-grown,
He wasted hours with Averill ; there, when first
The tented winter-field was broken up
Into that phalanx of the summer spears
That soon should wear the garland ; there again
When burr and bine were gather'd ; lastly there
At Christmas ; ever welcome at the Hall,
On whose dull sameness his full tide of youth
Broke with a phosphorescence charming even
My lady ; and the Baronet yet had laid
No bar between them : dull and self-involved,
Tall and erect, but bending from his height
With half-allowing smiles for all the world,
And mighty courteous in the main — his pride
Lay deeper than to wear it as his ring —
He, like an Aylmer in his Aylmerism,
Would care no more for Leolin's walking with her
Than for his old Newfoundland's, when they ran
To loose him at the stables, for he rose
Twofooted at the limit of his chain,
Roaring to make third : and how should Love,
Whom the cross-lightnings of four chance-met eyes

Flash into fiery life from nothing, follow
Such dear familiarities of dawn?
Seldom, but when he does, Master of all.

So these young hearts not knowing that they
loved,
Not she at least, nor conscious of a bar
Between them, nor by plight or broken ring
Bound, but an immemorial intimacy,
Wander'd at will, and oft accompanied
By Averill; his, a brother's love, that hung
With wings of brooding shelter o'er her peace,
Might have been other, save for Leolin's —
Who knows? but so they wander'd, hour by hour
Gather'd the blossom that rebloom'd, and drank
The magic cup that filled itself anew.

A whisper half reveal'd her to herself.
Far out beyond her lodges, where the brook
Vocal, with here and there a silence, ran
By sallowy rims, arose the labourers' homes,
A frequent haunt of Edith, on low knolls
That dimpling died into each other, huts
At random scatter'd, each a nest in bloom.
Her art, her hand, her council all had wrought
About them: here was one that, summer-blanch'd
Was parcel-bearded with the traveller's-joy
In Autumn, parcel ivy-clad; and here
The warm-blue breathings of a hidden hearth
Broke from a bower of vine and honeysuckle:
One look'd all rosetree, and another wore
A close-set robe of jasmine sown with stars:

This had a rosy sea of gillyflowers
About it ; this, a milky-way on earth,
Like visions in the northern dreamer's heavens,
A lily-avenue climbing to the doors ;
One, almost to the martin-haunted eaves



"OLD BEDRIDDEN PALSY."

A summer burial deep in hollyhocks ;
Each, its own charm ; and Edith's everywhere ;
And Edith ever visitant with him,
He but less loved than Edith, of her poor :
For she — so lowly-lovely and so loving,
Queenly responsive when the loyal hand

Rose from the clay it work'd in as she past,
Not sowing hedgerow texts and passing by,
Nor dealing goodly counsel from a height
That makes the lowest hate it, but a voice
Of comfort and an open hand of help,
A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs
Revered as theirs, but kindlier than themselves
To ailing wife or wailing infancy
Or old bedridden palsy, — was adored ;
He, loved for her and for himself. A grasp
Having the warmth and muscle of the heart,
A childly way with children, and a laugh
Ringing like proven golden coinage true,
Were no false passport to that easy realm,
Where once with Leolin at her side the girl,
Nursing a child, and turning to the warmth
The tender pink five-beaded baby-soles,
Heard the good mother softly whisper " Bless,
God bless 'em : marriages are made in Heaven."

A flash of semi-jealousy clear'd it to her.
My lady's Indian kinsman unannounced
With half a score of swarthy faces came.
His own, tho' keen and bold and soldierly,
Sear'd by the close ecliptic, was not fair ;
Fairer his talk, a tongue that ruled the hour,
Tho' seeming boastful : so when first he dash'd
Into the chronicle of a deedful day,
Sir Aylmer half forgot his lazy smile
Of patron " Good ! my lady's kinsman ! good !"
My lady with her fingers interlocked,

And rotatory thumbs on silken knees
Call'd all her vital spirits into each ear
To listen : unawares they flitted off,
Busying themselves about the flowerage
That stood from out a stiff brocade in which,
The meteor of a splendid season, she,
Once with this kinsman, ah, so long ago,
Stept thro' the stately minnet of those days :
But Edith's eager fancy hurried with him
Snatch'd thro' the perilous passes of his life :
Till Leolin, ever watchful of her eye,
Hated him with a momentary hate.
Wife-hunting, as the rumour ran, was he :
I know not, for he spoke not, only shower'd
His oriental gifts on everyone
And most on Edith : like a storm he came,
And shook the house, and like a storm he wen

Among the gifts he left her (possibly
He flow'd and ebb'd uncertain, to return
When others had been tested) there was one,
A dagger, in rich sheath with jewels on it
Sprinkled about in gold that branched itself
Fine as ice-ferns on January panes
Made by a breath. I know not whence at first,
Nor of what race, the work ; but as he told
The story, storming a hill-fort of thieves
He got it ; for their captain after fight,
His comrades having fought their last below,
Was climbing up the valley ; at whom he shot :
Down from the beetling crag to which he clung

Tumbled the tawny rascal at his feet,
This dagger with him, which when now admired
By Edith whom his pleasure was to please,
At once the costly Sahib yielded to her.

And Leolin, coming after he was gone,
Tost over all her presents petulantly :
And when she show'd the wealthy scabbard, saying
"Look what a lovely piece of workmanship!"
Slight was his answer, "Well—I care not for it:"
Then playing with the blade he prick'd his hand,
"A gracious gift to give a lady, this!"
"But would it be more gracious," ask'd the girl
"Were I to give this gift of his to one
That is no lady?" "Gracious? No," said he.
"Me?—but I cared not for it. O pardon me,
I seem to be ungraciousness itself."
"Take it," she added sweetly, "tho' his gift;
For I am more ungracious ev'n than you,
I care not for it either;" and he said,
"Why then I love it:" but Sir Aylmer past,
And neither loved nor liked the thing he heard.

The next day came a neighbour. Blues and reds
They talk'd of: blues were sure of it, he thought:
Then of the latest fox—where started—kill'd
In such a bottom: "Peter had the brush,
My Peter first:" and did Sir Aylmer know
That great pock-pitten fellow had been caught?
Then made his pleasure echo, hand to hand,
And rolling as it were the substance of it

Between his palms a moment up and down —
“The birds were warm, the birds were warm upon
him ;

We have him now :” and had Sir Aylmer heard —
Nay, but he must — the land was ringing of it —
This blacksmith border-marriage — one they
knew —

Raw from the nursery — who could trust a child?
That cursed France with her egalities !

And did Sir Aylmer (deferentially
With nearing chair and lower'd accent) think —
For people talk'd — that it was wholly wise
To let that handsome fellow Averill walk
So freely with his daughter ? people talk'd —
The boy might get a notion into him ;
The girl might be entangled ere she knew.

Sir Aylmer Aylmer slowly stiffening spoke :
“The girl and boy, Sir, know their differences !”
“Good,” said his friend, “but watch !” and he,
“Enough,

More than enough, Sir ! I can guard my own.”
They parted, and Sir Aylmer Aylmer watch'd.

Pale, for on her the thunders of the house
Had fallen first, was Edith that same night ;
Pale as the Jephtha's daughter, a rough piece
Of early rigid colour, under which
Withdrawing by the counter door to that
Which Leolin open'd, she cast back upon him
A piteous glance, and vanish'd. He, as one
Caught in a burst of unexpected storm,



"THE GIRL AND BOY, SIR, KNOW THEIR DIFFERENCES!"

And pelted with outrageous epithets,
Turning beheld the Powers of the House
On either side the hearth, indignant ; her,
Cooling her false cheek with a featherfan,
Him, glaring, by his own stale devil spurr'd,
And, like a beast hard-ridden, breathing hard.
"Ungenerous, dishonourable, base,
Presumptuous ! trusted as he was with her,
The sole succeder to their wealth, their lands,
The last remaining pillar of their house,
The one transmitter of their ancient name,
Their child." "Our child !" "Our heiress !"
"Ours !" for still,

Like echoes from beyond a hollow, came
Her sicklier iteration. Last he said,
"Boy, mark me ! for your fortunes are to make.
I swear you shall not make them out of mine.
Now inasmuch as you have practised on her,
Perplext her, made her half forget herself,
Swerve from her duty to herself and us —
Things in an Aylmer deem'd impossible,
Far as we track ourselves — I say that this —
Else I withdraw favour and countenance
From you and yours for ever — shall you do.
Sir, when you see her — but you shall not see her —
No, you shall write, and not to her, but me :
And you shall say that having spoken with me,
And after look'd into yourself, you find
That you meant nothing — as indeed you know
That you meant nothing. Such a match as this !
Impossible, prodigious !" These were words,
As meted by his measure of himself,

Arguing boundless forbearance : after which,
And Leolin's horror-stricken answer, " I
So foul a traitor to myself and her,
Never, oh never ; " for about as long
As the wind-hover hangs in balance, paused
Sir Aylmer reddening from the storm within,
Then broke all bonds of courtesy, and crying
" Boy, should I find you by my doors again,
My men shall lash you from them like a dog :
Hence ! " with a sudden execration drove
The footstool from before him, and arose ;
So, stammering " scoundrel " out of teeth that
ground

As in a dreadful dream, while Leolin still
Retreated half-aghast, the fierce old man
Follow'd, and under his own lintel stood
Storming with lifted hands, a hoary face
Meet for the reverence of the hearth, but now,
Beneath a pale and unimpassion'd moon,
Vext with unworthy madness, and deform'd.

Slowly and conscious of the rageful eye
That watch'd him, till he heard the ponderous door
Close, crashing with long echoes thro' the land,
Went Leolin ; then, his passions all in flood
And masters of his motion, furiously
Down thro' the bright lawns to his brother's ran,
And foam'd away his heart at Averill's ear :
Whom Averill solaced as he might, amazed :
The man was his, had been his father's, friend :
He must have seen, himself had seen it long ;
He must have known, himself had known : besides,

He never yet had set his daughter forth
Here in the woman-markets of the west,
Where our Caucasians let themselves be sold.
Some one, he thought, had slander'd Leolin to him.
" Brother, for I have loved you more as son
Than brother, let me tell you : I myself —
What is their pretty saying? jilted, is it?
Jilted I was : I say it for your peace.
Pain'd, and, as bearing in myself the shame
The woman should have borne, humiliated,
I lived for years a stunted sunless life ;
Till after our good parents past away,
Watching your growth, I seem'd again to grow.
Leolin, I almost sin in envying you :
The very whitest lamb in all my fold
Loves you : I know her : the worst thought she has
Is whiter even than her pretty hand :
She must prove true : for, brother, where two fight
The strongest wins, and truth and love are strength,
And you are happy : let her parents be."

But Leolin cried out the more upon them —
Insolent, brainless, heartless ! heiress, wealth,
Their wealth, their heiress ! wealth enough was
 theirs
For twenty matches. Were he lord of this,
Why twenty boys and girls should marry on it,
And forty blest ones bless him, and himself
Be wealthy still, ay, wealthier. He believed
This filthy marriage-hindering Mammon made
The harlot of the cities : nature crost

Was mother of the foul adulteries
That saturate soul with body. Name, too ! name,
Their ancient name ! they *might* be proud ; its
worth

Was being Edith's. Ah, how pale she had look'd
Darling, to-night ! they must have rated her
Beyond all tolerance. These old pheasant-lords,
These partridge-breeders of a thousand years,
Who had mildew'd in their thousands, doing
nothing

Since Egbert — why, the greater their disgrace !
Fall back upon a name ! rest, rot in that !
Not *keep* it noble, make it nobler ? fools,
With such a vantage-ground for nobleness !
He had known a man, a quintessence of man,
The life of all — who madly loved — and he,
Thwarted by one of these old father-fools,
Had rioted his life out, and made an end.
He would not do it ! her sweet face and faith
Held him from that : but he had powers, he knew it :
Back would he to his studies, make a name,
Name, fortune too : the world should ring of him
To shame these mouldy Aylmers in their graves :
Chancellor, or what is greatest would he be —
“O brother, I am grieved to learn your grief -
Give me my fling, and let me say my say.”

At which, like one that sees his own excess,
And easily forgives it as his own,
He laugh'd ; and then was mute ; but presently
Wept like a storm : and honest Averill seeing
How low his brother's mood had fallen, fetch'd

His richest beeswing from a binn reserved
For banquets, praised the waning red, and told
The vintage — when *this* Aylmer came of age —
Then drank and past it ; till at length the two,
Tho' Leolin flamed and fell again, agreed
That much allowance must be made for men.
After an angry dream this kindlier glow
Faded with morning, but his purpose held.

Yet once by night again the lovers met,
A perilous meeting under the tall pines
That darken'd all the northward of her Hall.
Him, to her meek and modest bosom prest
In agony, she promised that no force,
Persuasion, no, nor death, could alter her :
He, passionately hopefuller, would go,
Labour for his own Edith, and return
In such a sunlight of prosperity
He should not be rejected. " Write to me !
They loved me, and because I love their child
They hate me : there is war between us, dear,
Which breaks all bonds but ours ; we must remain
Sacred to one another." So they talk'd,
Poor children, for their comfort : the wind blew ;
The rain of heaven, and their own bitter tears,
Tears, and the careless rain of heaven, mixt
Upon their faces, as they kiss'd each other
In darkness, and above them roar'd the pine.

So Leolin went ; and as we task ourselves
To learn a language known but smatteringly
In phrases here and there at random, toil'd



"A PERILOUS MEETING UNDER THE TALL PINES."

Mastering the lawless science of our law,
That codeless myriad of precedent,
That wilderness of single instances,
Thro' which a few by wit or fortune led,
May beat a pathway out to wealth and fame.
The jests that flash'd about the pleader's room,
Lightning of the hour, the pun, the scurrilous tale,—
Old scandals buried now seven decads deep
In other scandals that have lived and died,
And left the living scandal that shall die —
Were dead to him already : bent as he was
To make disproof of scorn, and strong in hopes,
And prodigal of all brain-labour he,
Charier of sleep, and wine, and exercise,
Except when for a breathing-while at eve,
Some niggard fraction of an hour, he ran
Beside the river-bank : and then indeed
Harder the times were, and the hands of power
Were bloodier, and the according hearts of men
Seem'd harder too ; but the soft river-breeze,
Which fann'd the gardens of that rival rose
Yet fragrant in a heart remembering
His former talks with Edith, on him breathed
Far purelier in his rushings to and fro,
After his books, to flush his blood with air,
Then to his books again. My lady's cousin,
Half-sickening of his pension'd afternoon,
Drove in upon the student once or twice,
Ran a Malayan amuck against the times,
Had golden hopes for France and all mankind,
Answer'd all queries touching those at home
With a heaved shoulder and a saucy smile,

And fain had haled him out into the world,
And air'd him there : his nearer friends would say
"Screw not the chord too sharply lest it snap."
Then left alone he pluck'd her dagger forth
From where his worldless heart had kept it warm,
Kissing his vows upon it like a knight.
And wrinkled benchers often talk'd of him
Approvingly, and prophesied his rise :
For heart, I think, help'd head : her letters too,
Tho' far between, and coming fitfully
Like broken music, written as she found
Or made occasion, being strictly watch'd,
Charmed him thro' every labyrinth till he saw
An end, a hope, a light breaking upon him.

But they that cast her spirit into flesh,
Her worldly-wise begetters, plagued themselves
To sell her, those good parents, for her good.
Whatever eldest-born of rank or wealth
Might lie within their compass, him they lured
Into their net made pleasant by the baits
Of gold and beauty, wooing him to woo.
So month by month the noise about their doors,
And distant blaze of those dull banquets, made
The nightly wirer of their innocent hare
Falter before he took it. All in vain.
Sullen, defiant, pitying, wroth, return'd
Leolin's rejected rivals from their suit
So often, that the folly taking wings
Slipt o'er those lazy limits down the wind
With rumour, and became in other fields
A mockery to the yeomen over ale,

And laughter to their lords : but those at home,
As hunters round a hunted creature draw
The cordon close and closer toward the death,
Narrow'd her goings out and comings in ;
Forbad her first the house of Averill,
Then closed her access to the wealthier farms,
Last from her own home-circle of the poor
They barr'd her : yet she bore it : yet her cheek
Kept colour : wondrous ! but, O mystery !
What amulet drew her down to that old oak,
So old, that twenty years before, a part
Falling had let appear the brand of John —
Once grovelike, each huge arm a tree, but now
The broken base of a black tower, a cave
Of touchwood, with a single flourishing spray.
There the manorial lord too curiously
Raking in that millennial touchwood-dust
Found for himself a bitter treasure-trove ;
Burst his own wyvern on the seal, and read
Writhing a letter from his child, for which
Came at the moment Leolin's emissary,
A crippled lad, and coming turn'd to fly,
But scared with threats of jail and halter gave
To him that fluster'd his poor parish wits
The letter which he brought, and swore besides
To play their go-between as heretofore
Nor let them know themselves betray'd ; and then
Soul-stricken at their kindness to him, went
Hating his own lean heart and miserable.

Thenceforward oft from out a despot dream
The father panting woke, and oft, as dawn

Aroused the black republic on his elms,
Sweeping the frothfly from the fescue brush'd
Thro' the dim meadow toward his treasure-trove,
Seized it, took home, and to my lady, — who made
A downward crescent of her minion mouth,
Listless in all despondence,— read ; and tore,
As if the living passion symbol'd there
Were living nerves to feel the rent ; and burnt,
Now chafing at his own great self defied,
Now striking on huge stumbling-blocks of scorn
In babyisms and dear diminutives
Scatter'd all over the vocabulary
Of such a love as like a chidden child,
After much wailing, hush'd itself at last
Hopeless of answer : then tho' Averill wrote
And bad him with good heart sustain himself —
All would be well — the lover heeded not,
But passionately restless came and went,
And rustling once at night about the place,
There by a keeper shot at, slightly hurt,
Raging return'd : nor was it well for her
Kept to the garden now, and grove of pines,
Watch'd even there ; and one was set to watch
The watcher, and Sir Aylmer watch'd them all,
Yet bitterer from his readings : once indeed,
Warm'd with his wines, or taking pride in her,
She look'd so sweet, he kiss'd her tenderly
Not knowing what possess'd him : that one kiss
Was Leolin's one strong rival upon earth ;
Seconded, for my lady follow'd suit,
Seem'd hope's returning rose : and then ensued
A Martin's summer of his faded love,

Or ordeal by kindness ; after this
He seldom crost his child without a sneer ;
The mother flow'd in shallower acrimonies :
Never one kindly smile, one kindly word :
So that the gentle creature shut from all
Her charitable use, and face to face
With twenty months of silence, slowly lost
Nor greatly cared to lose, her hold on life.
Last, some low fever ranging round to spy
The weakness of a people or a house,
Like flies that haunt a wound, or deer, or men,
Or almost all that is, hurting the hurt—
Save Christ as we believe him — found the girl
And flung her down upon a conch of fire,
Where careless of the household faces near,
And crying upon the name of Leolin,
She, and with her, the race of Aylmer, past.

Star to star vibrates light : may soul to soul
Strike thro' a finer element of her own ?
So,— from afar,— touch as at once ? or why
That night, that moment, when she named his
name,
Did the keen shriek “ Yes, love, yes, Edith, yes,”
Shrill, till the comrade of his chambers woke,
And came upon him half-arisen from sleep,
With a weird bright eye, sweating and trembling,
His hair as it were crackling into flames,
His body half flung forward in pursuit,
And his long arms stretch'd as to grasp a flyer :
Nor knew he wherefore he had made the cry ;
And being much befool'd and idioted



By the rough amity of the other, sank
As into sleep again. The second day,
My lady's Indian kinsman rushing in,
A breaker of the bitter news from home,
Found a dead man, a letter edged with death
Beside him, and the dagger which himself
Gave Edith, redden'd with no bandit's blood :
"From Edith" was engraven on the blade.



"A LETTER EDGED WITH DEATH BESIDE HIM."

Then Averill went and gazed upon his death.
And when he came again, his flock believed —
Beholding how the years which are not Time's
Had blasted him — that many thousand days
Were clipt by horror from his term of life.
Yet the sad mother, for the second death
Scarce touch'd her thro' the nearness of the first,
And being used to find her pastor texts,

Sent to the harrow'd brother, praying him
To speak before the people of her child,
And fixt the Sabbath. Darkly that day rose :
Autumn's mock sunshine of the faded woods
Was all the life of it ; for hard on these,
A breathless burthen of low-folded heavens
Stifed and chill'd at once ; but every roof
Sent out a listener : many too had known
Edith among the hamlets round, and since
The parents' harshness and the hapless loves
And double death were widely murmur'd, left
Their own gray tower, or plain-faced tabernacle,
To hear him ; all in mourning these, and those
With blots of it about them, ribbon, glove
Or kerchief ; while the church,— one night, except
For greenish glimmerings thro' the lancets,— made
Still paler the pale head of him, who tower'd
Above them, with his hopes in either grave.

Long o'er his bent brows linger'd Averill,
His face magnetic to the hand from which
Livid he pluck'd it forth, and labour'd thro'
His brief prayer-prelude, gave the verse " Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate ! "
But lapsed into so long a pause again
As half amazed, half frightened all his flock :
Then from his height and loneliness of grief
Bore down in flood, and dash'd his angry heart
Against the desolations of the world,

Never since our bad earth became one sea,
Which rolling o'er the palaces of the proud,

And all but those who knew the living God —
Eight that were left to make a purer world —
When since had flood, fire, earthquake, thunder,
wrought

Such waste and havock as the idolatries,
Which from the low light of mortality
Shot up their shadows to the Heaven of Heavens,
And worshipt their own darkness in the Highest?
“ Gash thyself, priest, and honour thy brute Baäl,
And to thy worst self sacrifice thyself,
For with thy worst self hast thou clothed thy God.
Then came a Lord in no wise like to Baäl.
The babe shall lead the lion. Surely now
The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.
Crown thyself, worm, and worship thine own
lusts! —

No coarse and blockish God of acreage
Stands at thy gate for thee to grovel to —
Thy God is far diffused in noble groves
And princely halls, and farms, and flowing lawns,
And heaps of living gold that daily grow,
And title-scrolls and gorgeous heraldries.
In such a shape dost thou behold thy God.
Thou wilt not gash thy flesh for *him*; for thine
Fares richly, in fine linen, not a hair
Ruffled upon the scarfskin, even while
The deathless ruler of thy dying house
Is wounded to the death that cannot die;
And tho' thou numberest with the followers
Of one who cried, ‘ Leave all and follow me.’
Thee therefore with His light about thy feet,
Thee with His message ringing in thine ears,

Thee shall thy brother man, the Lord from Heaven,
Born of a village girl, carpenter's son,
Wonderful, Prince of Peace, the Mighty God,
Count the more base idolater of the two ;
Crueller : as not passing thro' the fire
Bodies, but souls—thy children's—thro' the smoke.
The blight of low desires — darkening thine own
To thine own likeness ; or if one of these,
Thy better born unhappily from thee,
Should, as by miracle, grow straight and fair —
Friends, I was bid to speak of such a one
By those who most have cause to sorrow for her —
Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
Fairer than Ruth among the fields of corn,
Fair as the Angel that said 'Hail!' she seem'd,
Who entering fill'd the house with sudden light.
For so mine own was brighten'd : where indeed
The roof so lowly but that beam of Heaven
Dawn'd sometime thro' the doorway? whose the
babe

Too ragged to be fondled on her lap,
Warm'd at her bosom? The poor child of shame
The common care whom no one cared for, leapt
To greet her, wasting his forgotten heart,
As with the mother he had never known,
In gambols ; for her fresh and innocent eyes
Had such a star of morning in their blue,
That all neglected places of the field
Broke into nature's music when they saw her.
Low was her voice, but won mysterious way
Thro' the seal'd ear to which a louder one
Was all but silence — free of alms her hand —

The hand that robed your cottage walls with flowers
Has often toil'd to clothe your little ones ;



“UPON THE SICK MAN’S BROW.”

How often placed upon the sick man’s brow
Cool’d it, or laid his feverous pillow smooth !

Had you one sorrow and she shared it not ?
One burthen and she would not lighten it ?
One spiritual doubt she did not soothe ?
Or when some heat of difference sparkled out,
How sweetly would she glide between your wraths,
And steal you from each other ! for she walk'd
Wearing the light yoke of that Lord of love,
Who still'd the rolling wave of Galilee !
And one — of him I was not bid to speak —
Was always with her, whom you also knew.
Him too you loved, for he was worthy love.
And these had been together from the first ;
They might have been together till the last.
Friends, this frail bark of ours, when sorely tried,
May wreck itself without the pilot's guilt,
Without the captain's knowledge : hope with me.
Whose shame is that, if he went hence with shame ?
Nor mine the fault, if losing both of these
I cry to vacant chairs and window'd walls,
' My house is left unto me desolate.' "

While thus he spoke, his hearers wept ; but some
Sons of the glebe, with other frowns than those
That knit themselves for summer shadow, scowl'd
At their great lord. He, when it seem'd he saw
No pale sheet-lightnings from afar, but fork'd
Of the near storm, and aiming at his head,
Sat anger-charm'd from sorrow, soldierlike,
Erect : but when the preacher's cadence flow'd
Softening thro' all the gentle attributes
Of his lost child, the wife, who watch'd his face,
Paled at a sudden twitch of his iron mouth ;

And "O pray God that he hold up," she thought,
"Or surely I shall shame myself and him."

"Nor yours the blame—for who beside your
hearths

Can take her place—if echoing me you cry

'Our house is left unto us desolate'?

But thou, O thou that killest, hadst thou known,

O thou that stonest, hadst thou understood

The things belonging to thy peace and ours!

Is there no prophet but the voice that calls

Doom upon kings, or in the waste 'Repent'?

Is not our own child on the narrow way,

Who down to those that saunter in the broad

Cries 'Come up hither,' as a prophet to us?

Is there no stoning save with flint and rock?

Yes, as the dead we weep for testify—

No desolation but by sword and fire?

Yes, as your moanings witness, and myself

Am lonelier, darker, earthlier for my loss.

Give me your prayers, for he is past your prayers,

Not past the living fount of pity in Heaven.

But I that thought myself long-suffering, meek,

Exceeding 'poor in spirit'—how the words

Have twisted back upon themselves, and mean

Vileness, we are grown so proud—I wish'd my
voice

A rushing tempest of the wrath of God

To blow these sacrifices thro' the world—

Sent like the twelve-divided concubine

To inflame the tribes: but there—out yonder—
earth

Lightens from her own central Hell — O there
The red fruit of an old idolatry —
The heads of chiefs and princes fall so fast,
They cling together in the ghastly sack —
The land all shambles — naked marriages
Flash from the bridge, and ever-murder'd France,
By shores that darken with the gathering wolf,
Runs in a river of blood to the sick sea.
Is this a time to madden madness then?
Was this a time for these to flaunt their pride?
May Pharaoh's darkness, folds as dense as those
Which hid the Holiest from the people's eyes
Ere the great death, shroud this great sin from all!
Doubtless our narrow world must canvass it:
O rather pray for those and pity them,
Who, thro' their own desire accomplish'd, bring
Their own gray hairs with sorrow to the grave —
Who broke the bond which they desired to break,
Which else had link'd their race with times to
come —

Who wove coarse webs to snare her purity,
Grossly contriving their dear daughter's good —
Poor souls, and knew not what they did, but sat
Ignorant, devising their own daughter's death!
May not that earthly chastisement suffice?
Have not our love and reverence left them bare?
Will not another take their heritage?
Will there be children's laughter in their hall
For ever and for ever, or one stone
Left on another, or is it a light thing
That I, their guest, their host, their ancient friend,
I made by these the last of all my race,

Must cry to these the last of theirs, as cried
Christ ere His agony to those that swore
Not by the temple but the gold, and made
Their own traditions God, and slew the Lord,
And left their memories a world's curse — ' Behold,
Your house is left unto you desolate ' ?''

Ended he had not, but she brook'd no more :
Long since her heart had beat remorselessly,
Her cramp't-up sorrow pain'd her, and a sense
Of meanness in her unresisting life.
Then their eyes vex't her ; for on entering
He had cast the curtains of their seat aside —
Black velvet of the costliest — she herself
Had seen to that : fain had she closed them now,
Yet dared not stir to do it, only near'd
Her husband inch by inch, but when she laid,
Wife-like, her hand in one of his, he veil'd
His face with the other, and at once, as falls
A creeper when the prop is broken, fell
The woman shrieking at his feet, and swoon'd.
Then her own people bore along the nave
Her pendent hands, and narrow meagre face
Seam'd with the shallow cares of fifty years :
And her the Lord of all the landscape round
Ev'n to its last horizon, and of all
Who peer'd at him so keenly, follow'd out
Tall and erect, but in the middle aisle
Reel'd, as a footsore ox in crowded ways
Stumbling across the market to his death,
Unpitied ; for he groped as blind, and seem'd
Always about to fall, grasping the pews

And oaken finials till he touch'd the door ;
Yet to the lychgate where his chariot stood,
Strode from the porch, tall and erect again.

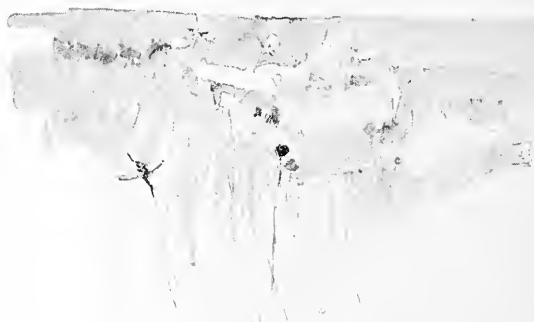
But nevermore did either pass the gate
Save under pall with bearers. In one month,
Thro' weary and yet ever wearier hours,
The childless mother went
to seek her child ;
And when he felt the silence
of his house
About him, and the chang
and not the change,
And those fixt eyes of painted
ancestors
Staring for ever from their
gilded walls
On him their last descendant,
his own head
Began to droop, to fall ; the
man became



" HIS ONE WORD WAS
' DESOLATE. ' "

Imbecile ; his one word was " desolate ; "
Dead for two years before his death was he ;
But when the second Christmas came, escaped
His keepers, and the silence which he felt,
To find a deeper in the narrow gloom
By wife and child ; nor wanted at his end
The dark retinue reverencing death
At golden thresholds ; nor from tender hearts,
And those who sorrow'd o'er a vanish'd race,
Pity, the violet on the tyrant's grave.
Then the great Hall was wholly broken down,

And the broad woodland parcell'd into farms ;
And where the two contrived their daughter's good,
Lies the hawk's cast, the mole has made his run,
The hedgehog underneath the plantain bores,
The rabbit fondles his own harmless face,
The slow-worm creeps, and the thin weasel there
Follows the mouse, and all is open field.



SEA DREAMS.

A city clerk, but gently born and bred ;
His wife, an unknown artist's orphan child —
One babe was theirs, a Margaret, three years old :
They, thinking that her clear germander eye

Droopt in the
giant-factored
city-gloom,

Came, with a
month's leave
given them, to
the sea :

For which his
gains were
dock'd, how-
ever small :

Small were his
gains, and hard
his work ; be-
sides,

Their slender household fortunes (for the man
Had risk'd his little) like the little thrift
Trembled in perilous places o'er a deep :
And oft, when sitting all alone, his face
Would darken, as he cursed his credulousness,
And that one unctuous mouth which lured him,
rogue,

To buy strange shares in some Peruvian mine.



"MARGARET, THREE YEARS OLD."

Now seaward-bound for health they gain'd a coast,
All sand and cliff and deep-inrunning cave,
At close of day ; slept, woke, and went the next,
The Sabbath, pious variers from the church,
To chapel ; where a heated pulpiteer,
Not preaching simple Christ to simple men,
Announced the coming doom, and fulminated
Against the scarlet woman and her creed ;
For sideways up he swung his arms, and shriek'd
" Thus, thus with violence," ev'n as if he held
The Apocalyptic millstone, and himself
Were that great Angel ; " Thus with violence
Shall Babylon be cast into the sea ;
Then comes the close." The gentle-hearted wife
Sat shuddering at the ruin of a world ;
He at his own : but when the wordy storm
Had ended, forth they came and paced the shore,
Ran in and out the long sea-framing caves,
Drank the large air, and saw, but scarce believed
(The sootflake of so many a summer still
Clung to their fancies) that they saw the sea.
So now on sand they walk'd, and now on cliff,
Lingering about the thymy promontories.
Till all the sails were darken'd in the west,
And rosed in the east : then homeward and to bed :
Where she, who kept a tender Christian hope,
Haunting a holy text, and still to that
Returning, as the bird returns, at night,
" Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,"
Said, " Love, forgive him : " but he did not speak ;
And silenced by that silence lay the wife,
Remembering her dear Lord who died for all,

And musing on the little lives of men,
And how they mar this little by their feuds.

But while the two were sleeping, a full tide
Rose with ground-swell, which, on the foremost
rocks

Touching, upjetted in spirts of wild sea-smoke,
And scaled in sheets of wasteful foam, and fell
In vast sea-cataracts — ever and anon
Dead claps of thunder from within the cliffs
Heard thro' the living roar. At this the babe,
Their Margaret, cradled near them, wail'd and woke
The mother, and the father suddenly cried,
“A wreck, a wreck!” then turn'd, and groaning
said,

“Forgive! How many will say, ‘forgive,’ and
find

A sort of absolution in the sound
To hate a little longer! No; the sin
That neither God nor man can well forgive,
Hypocrisy, I saw it in him at once.
Is it so true that second thoughts are best?
Not first, and third, which are a riper first?
Too ripe, too late! they come too late for use.
Ah love, there surely lives in man and beast
Something divine to warn them of their foes:
And such a sense, when first I fronted him,
Said, ‘Trust him not;’ but after, when I came
To know him more, I lost it, knew him less;
Fought with what seem'd my own uncharity;
Sat at his table; drank his costly wines;

Made more and more allowance for his talk ;
Went further, fool ! and trusted him with all,
All my poor scrapings from a dozen years
Of dust and deskwork : there is no such mine,
None ; but a gulf of ruin, swallowing gold,
Not making. Ruin'd ! ruin'd ! the sea roars
Ruin : a fearful night !”

“Not fearful ; fair,”
Said the good wife, “if every star in heaven
Can make it fair : you do but hear the tide.
Had you ill dreams ?”

“O yes,” he said, “I dream'd
Of such a tide swelling toward the land,
And I from out the boundless outer deep
Swept with it to the shore, and enter'd one
Of those dark caves that run beneath the cliffs.
I thought the motion of the boundless deep
Bore thro' the cave, and I was heaved upon it
In darkness : then I saw one lovely star
Larger and larger. ‘What a world,’ I thought,
‘To live in !’ but in moving on I found
Only the landward exit of the cave,
Bright with the sun upon the stream beyond :
And near the light a giant woman sat,
All over earthy, like a piece of earth,
A pickaxe in her hand : then out I slipt
Into a land all sun and blossom, trees
As high as heaven, and every bird that sings :
And here the night-light flickering in my eyes
Awoke me.”

“That was then your dream,” she said,
“Not sad, but sweet.”

“So sweet, I lay,” said he,
“And mused upon it, drifting up the stream
In fancy, till I slept again, and pieced
The broken vision ; for I dream’d that still
The motion of the great deep bore me on,
And that the woman walk’d upon the brink :
I wonder’d at her strength, and ask’d her of it :
‘It came,’ she said, ‘by working in the mines :’
O then to ask her of my shares, I thought ;
And ask’d ; but not a word ; she shook her head.
And then the motion of the current ceased,
And there was rolling thunder : and we reach’d
A mountain, like a wall of burs and thorns ;
But she with her strong feet up the steep hill
Trode out a path : I follow’d ; and at top
She pointed seaward : there a fleet of glass,
That seem’d a fleet of jewels under me,
Sailing along before a gloomy cloud
That not one moment ceased to thunder, past
In sunshine : right across its track there lay,
Down in the water, a long reef of gold,
Or what seem’d gold : and I was glad at first
To think that in our often-rausack’d world
Still so much gold was left ; and then I fear’d
Lest the gay navy there should splinter on it,
And fearing waved my arm to warn them off ;
An idle signal, for the brittle fleet
(I thought I could have died to save it) near’d

Touch'd, clink'd, and clash'd, and vanish'd, and I
woke

I heard the clash so clearly. Now I see
My dream was Life ; the woman honest Work ;
And my poor venture but a fleet of glass
Wreck'd on a reef of visionary gold."

"Nay," said the kindly wife to comfort him,
"You raised your arm, you tumbled down and broke
The glass with little Margaret's medicine in it ;
And, breaking that, you made and broke your dream :
A trifle makes a dream, a trifle breaks."

"No trifle," groan'd the husband ; "yesterday
I met him suddenly in the street, and ask'd
That which I ask'd the woman in my dream.
Like her, he shook his head. 'Show me the books !'
He dodged me with a long and loose account.
'The books, the books !' but he, he could not wait,
Bound on a matter he of life and death :
When the great Books see Daniel seven and ten)
Were open'd, I should find he meant me well ;
And then began to bloat himself, and ooze
All over with the fat affectionate smile
That makes the widow lean. 'My dearest friend,
Have faith, have faith ! We live by faith,' said he :
'And all things work together for the good
Of those' — it makes me sick to quote him — last
Gript my hand hard, and with God-bless-you went.
I stood like one that had received a blow :
I found a hard friend in his loose accounts,
A loose one in the hard grip of his hand,

A curse in his God-bless-you : then my eyes
Pursued him down the street, and far away,
Among the honest shoulders of the crowd,
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee."

"Was he so bound, poor soul?" said the good
wife ;

"So are we all : but do not call him, love,
Before you prove him, rogue, and proved, forgive.
His gain is loss ; for he that wrongs his friend
Wrongs himself more, and ever bears about
A silent court of justice in his breast,
Himself the judge and jury, and himself
The prisoner at the bar, ever condemn'd :
And that drags down his life : then comes what
comes

Hereafter : and he meant, he said he meant,
Perhaps he meant, or partly meant, you well."

" 'With all his conscience and one eye askew'—
Love, let me quote these lines, that you may learn
A man is likewise counsel for himself,
Too often, in that silent court of yours—
'With all his conscience and one eye askew,
So false, he partly took himself for true ;
Whose pious talk, when most his heart was dry,
Made wet the crafty crowsfoot round his eye ;
Who, never naming God except for gain,
So never took that useful name in vain,
Made Him his catspaw and the Cross his tool,
And Christ the bait to trap his dupe and fool ;

Nor deeds of gift, but gifts of grace he forged,
And snake-like slined his victim ere he gorged ;
And oft at Bible meetings, o'er the rest
Arising, did his holy oily best,
Dropping the too rough H in Hell and Heaven,
To spread the Word by which himself had thriven.
How like you this old satire ? ”

“ Nay,” she said,
‘ I loathe it : he had never kindly heart,
Nor ever cared to better his own kind,
Who first wrote satire, with no pity in it.
But will you hear *my* dream, for I had one
That altogether went to music ? Still
It awed me.”

Then she told it, having dream'd
Of that same coast.

— But round the North, a light,
A belt, it seem'd, of luminous vapour, lay,
And ever in it a low musical note
Swell'd up and died ; and, as it swell'd, a ridge
Of breaker issued from the belt, and still
Grew with the growing note, and when the note
Had reach'd a thunderous fulness, on those cliffs
Broke, mixt with awful light (the same as that
Living within the belt) whereby she saw
That all those lines of cliffs were cliffs no more,
But huge cathedral fronts of every age,
Grave, florid, stern, as far as eye could see,
One after one ; and then the great ridge drew,

Lessening to the lessening music, back,
And past into the belt and swell'd again
Slowly to music: ever when it broke
The statues, king or saint, or founder fell;
Then from the gaps and chasms of ruin left
Came men and women in dark clusters round,
Some crying, "Set them up! they shall not fall!"
And others, "Let them lie, for they have fall'n."
And still they strove and wrangled: and she grieved
In her strange dream, she knew not why, to find
Their wildest wailings never out of tune
With that sweet note; and ever as their shrieks
Ran highest up the gamut, that great wave
Returning, while none mark'd it, on the crowd
Broke, mixt with awful light, and show'd their eyes
Glaring, and passionate looks, and swept away
The men of flesh and blood, and men of stone,
To the waste deeps together.

"Then I fixt

My wistful eyes on two fair images,
Both crown'd with stars and high among the stars,—
The Virgin Mother standing with her child
High up on one of those dark minster-fronts—
Till she began to totter, and the child
Clung to the mother, and sent out a cry
Which mixt with little Margaret's, and I woke,
And my dream awed me:—well—but what are
dreams?

Yours came but from the breaking of a glass,
And mine but from the crying of a child."

“ Child? No ! ” said he, “ but this tide’s roar, and
his,
Our Boanerges with his threats of doom,
And loud-lung’d Antilbabylonianisms
(Altho’ I grant but little music there)
Went both to make your dream : but if there were
A music harmonizing our wild cries,
Sphere-music such as that you dream’d about,
Why, that would make our passions far too like
The discords dear to the musician. No —
One shriek of hate would jar all the hymns of
heaven :
True Devils with no ear, they howl in tune
With nothing but the Devil ! ”

“ ‘ True ’ indeed !
One of our town, but later by an hour
Here than ourselves, spoke with me on the shore ;
While you were running down the sands, and made
The dimpled flounce of the sea-furbelow flap,
Good man, to please the child. She brought strange
news.
Why were you silent when I spoke to-night ?
I had set my heart on your forgiving him
Before you knew. We *must* forgive the dead.”

“ Dead ! who is dead ? ”

“ The man your eye pursued.
A little after you had parted with him,
He suddenly dropt dead of heart-disease.”

“Dead? he? of heart-disease? what heart had he
To die of? dead!”

“Ah, dearest, if there be
A devil in man, there is an angel too,
And if he did that wrong you charge him with,
His angel broke his heart. But your rough voice
(You spoke so loud) has roused the child again.
Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not sleep
Without her ‘little birdie’? well then, sleep,
And I will sing you ‘birdie.’”

Saying this,
The woman half turn’d round from him she loved,
Left him one hand, and reaching thro’ the night
Her other, found (for it was close beside)
And half-embraced the basket cradle-head
With one soft arm, which, like the pliant bough
That moving moves the nest and nestling, sway’d
The cradle, while she sang this baby song.

What does little birdie say
In her nest at peep of day?
Let me fly, says little birdie,
Mother, let me fly away.
Birdie, rest a little longer,
Till the little wings are stronger.
So she rests a little longer,
Then she flies away.

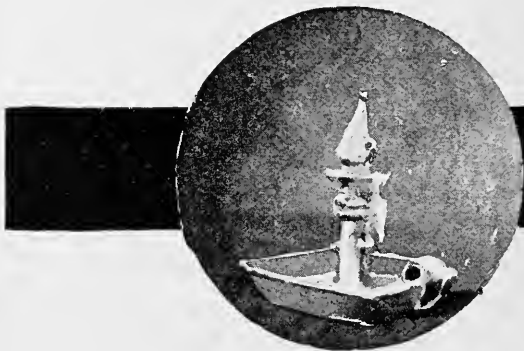
What does little baby say,
In her bed at peep of day?
Baby says, like little birdie
Let me rise and fly away.

Baby, sleep a little longer,
Till the little limbs are stronger.
If she sleeps a little longer,
Baby too shall fly away.

"She sleeps : let us too, let all evil, sleep.
He also sleeps — another sleep than ours.
He can do no more wrong : forgive him, dear,
And I shall sleep the sounder !"

Then the man,
"His deeds yet live, the worst is yet to come.
Yet let your sleep for this one night be sound :
I do forgive him !"

"Thanks, my love," she said,
"Your own will be the sweeter," and they slept.



LUCRETIVS.

LUCILIA, wedded to Lucretius, found
Her master cold ; for when the morning flush
Of passion and the first embrace had died
Between them, tho' he lov'd her none the less,
Yet often when the woman heard his foot
Return from pacings in the field, and ran
To greet him with a kiss, the master took
Small notice, or austere, for —his mind
Half buried in some weightier argument,
Or fancy, borne perhaps upon the rise
And long roll of the Hexameter — he past
To turn and ponder those three hundred scrolls
Left by the Teacher, whom he held divine.
She brook'd it not ; but wrathful, petulant,
Dreaming some rival, sought and found a witch
Who brew'd the philtre which had power, they said,
To lead an errant passion home again.
And this, at times, she mingled with his drink,
And this destroy'd him ; for the wicked broth
Confused the chemic labour of the blood,
And tickling the brute brain within the man's
Made havoc among those tender cells, and check'd
His power to shape : he loathed himself ; and once
After a tempest woke upon a morn
That mock'd him with returning calm, and cried :

“Storm in the night ! for thrice I heard the rain
Rushing ; and once the flash of a thunderbolt —



"A WITCH WHO BREW'D THE PHILTRE."

Methought I
 never saw so
 fierce a fork —
 Struck out the
 streaming moun-
 tain-side, and
 show'd
 A riotous conflu-
 ence of water-
 courses
 Blanching and
 billowing in a
 hollow of it,
 Where all but
 yester-eve was
 dusty-dry.

"Storm, and what
 dreams, ye holy
 Gods, what
 dreams!
 For thrice I wak-
 en'dafterdreams.
 Perchance
 We do but recol-
 lect the dreams
 that come

Just ere the waking: terrible! for it seem'd
 A void was made in nature; all her bonds
 Crack'd; and I saw the flaring atom-streams

And torrents of her myriad universe,
Ruining along the illimitable inane,
Fly on to clash together again, and make
Another and another frame of things
For ever : that was mine, my dream, I knew it —
Of and belonging to me, as the dog
With inward yelp and restless forefoot plies
His function of the woodland : but the next !
I thought that all the blood by Sylla shed
Came driving rainlike down again on earth,
And where it dash'd the reddening meadow, sprang
No dragon warriors from Cadmean teeth,
For these I thought my dream would show to me,
But girls, Hetairai, curious in their art,
Hired animalisms, vile as those that made
The mulberry-faced Dictator's orgies worse
Than aught they fable of the quiet Gods.
And hands they mixt, and yell'd and round me
drove
In narrowing circles till I yell'd again
Half-suffocated, and sprang up, and saw —
Was it the first beam of my latest day ?

“Then, then, from utter gloom stood out the
breasts,
The breasts of Helen, and hoveringly a sword
Now over and now under, now direct,
Pointed itself to pierce, but sank down shamed
At all that beauty ; and as I stared, a fire,
The fire that left a roofless Ilion,
Shot out of them, and scorch'd me that I woke.

.

.

.

“Is this thy vengeance, holy Venus, thine,
Because I would not one of thine own doves,
Not e'en a rose, were offer'd to thee? thine,
Forgetful how my rich procemion makes
Thy glory fly along the Italian field,
In lays that will outlast thy Deity?

“Deity? nay, thy worshippers. My tongue
Trips, or I speak profanely. Which of these
Angers thee most, or angers thee at all?
Not if thou be'st of those who, far aloof
From envy, hate and pity, and spite and scorn,
Live the great life which all our greatest fain
Would follow, center'd in eternal calm.

“Nay, if thou canst, O Goddess, like ourselves
Touch, and be touched, then would I cry to thee
To kiss thy Mavors, roll thy tender arms
Round him, and keep him from the lust of blood
That makes a steaming slaughter-house of Rome.

“Ay, but I meant not thee; I meant not her,
Whom all the pines of Ida shook to see
Slide from that quiet heaven of hers, and tempt
The Trojan, while his neat-herds were abroad;
Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter wept
Her Deity false in human-amorous tears;
Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
Calliope to grace his golden verse —
Ay, and this Kypris also — did I take

That popular name of thine to shadow forth
The all-generating powers and genial heat
Of Nature, when she strikes thro' the thick blood
Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs are glad
Nosing the mother's udder, and the bird
Makes his heart voice amid the blaze of flowers :
Which things appear the work of mighty Gods.

“The Gods ! and if I go *my* work is left
Unfinish'd — *if* I go. The Gods, who haunt
The lucid interspace of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to mar
Their sacred everlasting calm ! and such,
Not all so fine, nor so divine a calm,
Not such, nor all unlike it, man may gain
Letting his own life go. The Gods, the Gods !
If all be atoms, how then should the Gods
Being atomic not be dissoluble,
Not follow the great law ? My master held
That Gods there are, for all men so believe.
I prest my footsteps into his, and meant
Surely to lead my Memmius in a train
Of flowery clauses onward to the proof
That Gods there are, and deathless. Meant ? I
meant ?

I have forgotten what I meant : my mind
Stumbles, and all my faculties are lamed.

“Look where another of our Gods, the Sun,
Apollo, Delius, or of older use

All-seeing Hyperion — what you will —
Has mounted yonder ; since he never sware,
Except his wrath were wreak'd on wretched man,
That he would only shine among the dead
Hereafter ; tales ! for never yet on earth
Could dead flesh creep, or bits of roasting ox
Moan round the spit — nor knows he what he sees ;
King of the East altho' he seem, and girt
With song and flame and fragrance, slowly lifts
His golden feet on these empurpled stairs
That climb into the windy halls of heaven :
And here he glances on an eye new-born,
And gets for greeting but a wail of pain ;
And here he stays upon a freezing orb
That fain would gaze upon him to the last ;
And here upon a yellow eyelid fall'n
And closed by those who mourn a friend in vain,
Not thankful that his troubles are no more.
And me, altho' his fire is on my face
Blinding, he sees not, nor at all can tell
Whether I mean this day to end myself,
Or lend an ear to Plato where he says,
That men like soldiers may not quit the post
Allotted by the Gods : but he that holds
The Gods are careless, wherefore need he care
Greatly for them, nor rather plunge at once,
Being troubled, wholly out of sight, and sink
Past earthquake — ay, and gout and stone, that break
Body toward death, and palsy, death-in-life,
And wretched age — and worst disease of all,
These prodigies of myriad nakednesses,
And twisted shapes of lust, unspeakable,

Abominable, strangers at my hearth
Not welcome, harpies miring every dish,
The phantom husks of something foully done,
And fleeting thro' the boundless universe,
And blasting the long quiet of my breast
With animal heat and dire insanity?

“How should the mind, except it loved them,
clasp
These idols to herself? or do they fly
Now thinner, and now thicker, like the flakes
In a fall of snow, and so press in, perforce
Of multitude, as crowds that in an hour
Of civic tumult jam the doors, and bear
The keepers down, and throng, their rags and they
The basest, far into that council-hall
Where sit the best and stateliest of the land?

“Can I not fling this horror off me again,
Seeing with how great ease Nature can smile,
Balmier and nobler from her bath of storm,
At random ravage? and how easily
The mountain there has cast his cloudy slough,
Now towering o'er him in serenest air,
A mountain o'er a mountain, — ay, and within
All hollow as the hopes and fears of men?

“But who was he, that in the garden snared
Picus and Faunus, rustic Gods? a tale
To laugh at — more to laugh at in myself —
For look! what is it? there? yon arbutus
Totters; a noiseless riot underneath

Strikes through the wood, sets all the tops quivering —

The mountain quickens into Nymph and Faun ;
And here an Oread — how the sun delights
To glance and shift about her slippery slides,
And rosy knees and supple roundedness,
And budded bosom-peaks — who this way runs
Before the rest — A satyr, a satyr, see,
Follows ; but him I proved impossible ;
Twy-natured is no nature : yet he draws
Nearer and nearer, and I scan him now
Beastlier than any phantom of his kind
That ever butted his rough brother-brute
For lust or lusty blood or provender :
I hate, abhor, spit, sicken at him ; and she
Loathes him as well ; such a precipitate heel,
Fledged as it were with Mercury's ankle-wing,
Whirls her to me : but will she fling herself,
Shameless upon me : Catch her, goat-foot : nay,
Hide, hide them, million-myrtled wilderness,
And cavern-shadowing laurels, hide ! do I wish —
What ? — that the bush were leafless ? or to overwhelm
All of them in one massacre ? O ye Gods,
I know you careless, yet, behold, to you
From childly wont and ancient use I call —
I thought I lived securely as yourselves —
No lewdness, narrowing envy, monkey-spite,
No madness of ambition, avarice, none :
No larger feast than under plane or pine
With neighbours laid along the grass, to take
Only such cups as left us friendly-warm,
Affirming each his own philosophy —



"A SATYR, A SATYR, SEE, FOLLOWS."

Nothing to mar the sober majesties
Of settled, sweet. Epicurean life.
But now it seems some unseen monster lays
His vast and filthy hands upon my will,
Wrenching it backward into his ; and spoils
My bliss in being ; and it was not great ;
For save when shutting reasons up in rhythm,
Or Heliconian honey in living words,
To make a truth less harsh, I often grew
Tired of so much within our little life,
Or of so little in our little life —
Poor little life that toddles half an hour
Crown'd with a flower or two, and there an end —
And since the nobler pleasure seems to fade,
Why should I, beastlike as I find myself,
Not manlike end myself? — our privilege —
What beast has heart to do it? And what man,
What Roman would be dragg'd in triumph thus?
Not I ; not he, who bears one name with her
Whose death-blow struck the dateless doom of
 kings,
When, brooking not the Tarquin in her veins,
She made her blood in sight of Collatine
And all his peers, flushing the guiltless air,
Spout from the maiden fountain in her heart.
And from it sprang the Commonwealth, which
 breaks
As I am breaking now !

 “ And therefore now
Let her, that is the womb and tomb of all,
Great Nature, take and forcing far apart
Those blind beginnings that have made me man,

Dash them anew together at her will
Thro' all her cycles — into man once more,
Or beast or bird or fish, or opulent flower :
But till this cosmic order everywhere
Shatter'd into one earthquake in one day
Cracks all to pieces, — and that hour perhaps
Is not so far when momentary man
Shall seem no more a something to himself,
But he, his hopes and hates, his homes and fanes,
And even his bones long laid within the grave,
The very sides of the grave itself shall pass,
Vanishing, atom and void, atom and void,
Into the unseen for ever, — till that hour,
My golden work in which I told a truth
That stays the rolling Ixionian wheel,
That numbs the Fury's ringlet-snake, and plucks
The mortal soul from out immortal hell,
Shall stand : ay, surely : then it fails at last
And perishes as I must ; for O Thou,
Passionless bride, divine Tranquility,
Yearn'd after by the wisest of the wise,
Who fail to find thee, being as thou art
Without one pleasure and without one pain,
Howbeit I know thou surely must be mine
Or soon or late, yet out of season, thus
I woo thee roughly, for thou carest not
How roughly men may woo thee so they win —
Thus — thus : the soul flies out and dies in the air."

With that he drove the knife into his side :
She heard him raging, heard him fall ; ran in,
Beat breast, tore hair, cried out upon herself

As having fail'd in duty to him, shriek'd
That she but meant to win him back, fell on him,
Clasp'd, kiss'd him, wail'd : he answer'd, "Care not
thou !

'Thy duty? What is duty? Fare thee well



"THUS : THE SOUL FLIES OUT AND DIES IN THE AIR."

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF
WELLINGTON.

PUBLISHED IN 1852.

I.

BURY the Great Duke
With an empire's lamentation,
Let us bury the Great Duke
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,
Mourning when their leaders fall,
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II.

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?
Here, in streaming London's central roar.
Let the sound of those he wrought for,
And the feet of those he fought for,
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III.

Lead out the pageant : sad and slow,
As fits an universal woe,
Let the long long procession go,
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,
And let the mournful martial music blow ;
The last great Englishman is low.

IV.

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.
No more in soldier fashion will he greet
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute :
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,
Whole in himself, a common good.
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,
Our greatest yet with least pretence,
Great in council and great in war,
Foremost captain of his time,
Rich in saving common-sense,
And, as the greatest only are,
In his simplicity sublime.
O good gray head which all men knew,
O voice from which their omens all men drew,
O iron nerve to true occasion true,
O fall'n at length that tower of strength
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew !
Such was he whom we deplore.
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er,
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

V.

All is over and done :
Render thanks to the giver.
England, for thy son.
Let the bell be toll'd.
Render thanks to the Giver,

And render him to the mould.
Under the cross of gold
That shines over city and river,
There he shall rest for ever
Among the wise and the bold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a reverent people behold
The towering car, the sable steeds :
Bright let it be with its blazon'd deeds,
Dark in its funeral fold.
Let the bell be toll'd :
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd ;
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd
Thro' the dome of the golden cross ;
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss ;
He knew their voices of old.
For many a time in many a clime
His captain's-ear has heard them boom
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom :
When he with those deep voices wrought,
Guarding realms and kings from shame ;
With those deep voices our dead captain taught
The tyrant, and asserts his claim
In that dread sound to the great name,
Which he has worn so pure of blame,
In praise and in dispraise the same,
A man of well-attemper'd frame.
O civic muse, to such a name,
To such a name for ages long,
To such a name,
Preserve a broad approach of fame,
And ever-echoing avenues of song.

VI.

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,
With banner and with music, with soldier and with
priest,
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest ?
Mighty Seaman, this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea.
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,
The greatest sailor since our world began.
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,
To thee the greatest soldier comes ;
For this is he
Was great by land as thou by sea ;
His foes were thine ; he kept us free ;
O give him welcome, this is he
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,
And worthy to be laid by thee ;
For this is England's greatest son,
He that gain'd a hundred fights,
Nor ever lost an English gun ;
This is he that far away
Against the myriads of Assaye
Clash'd with his fiery few and won ;
And underneath another sun,
Warring on a later day,
Round affrighted Lisbon drew
The treble works, the vast designs
Of his labour'd rampart-lines,
Where he greatly stood at bay,
Whence he issued forth anew,
And ever great and greater grew,



" MUFFLED DRUMS."

(303)

Beating from the wasted vines
Back to France her banded swarms,
Back to France with countless blows,
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew
Beyond the Pyrenean pines,
Follow'd up in valley and glen
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,
And England pouring on her foes.
Such a war had such a close.
Again their ravening eagle rose
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,
And barking for the thrones of kings ;
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down ;
A day of onsets of despair !
Dash'd on every rocky square
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away ;
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew ;
Thro' the long-tormented air
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.
So great a soldier taught us there,
What long-enduring hearts could do
In that world-earthquake, Waterloo !
Mighty Seaman tender and true,
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,
If aught of things that here befall
Touch a spirit among things divine,
If love of country move thee there at all,

Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine !
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice
In full acclaim,
A people's voice,
The proof and echo of all human fame,
A people's voice, when they rejoice
At civic revel and pomp and game,
Attest their great commander's claim
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

VII.

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers ;
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set
His Briton in blown seas and storming showers,
We have a voice, with which to pay the debt,
Of boundless love and reverence and regret
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control ;
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,
And save the one true seed of freedom sown
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,
That sober freedom out of which there springs
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind
Till public wrongs be crumbled into dust,
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.

Remember him who led your hosts ;
He bad you guard the sacred coasts.
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall ;
His voice is silent in your council-hall
For ever ; and whatever tempests lour
For ever silent ; even if they broke
In thunder, silent ; yet remember all
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke ;
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,
Nor palter'd with eternal God for power ;
Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow
Thro' either babbling world of high and low ;
Whose life was work, whose language rife
With rugged maxims hewn from life ;
Who never spoke against a foe ;
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke
All great self-seekers trampling on the right :
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named ;
Truth-lover was our English Duke ;
Whatever record leap to light
He never shall be shamed.

VIII.

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,
Followed by the brave of other lands,
He, on whom from both her open hands
Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.
Yea, let all good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves or serves the state.

Not once or twice in our rough island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory :
He that walks it, only thirsting
For the right, and learns to deaden
Love of self, before his journey closes,
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting



"VOLUPTUOUS GARDEN-ROSES."

Into glossy purples, which outredden
All voluptuous garden-roses.
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory :

He, that ever following her commands,
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won
His path upward, and prevail'd,
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled
Are close upon the shining table-lands
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.
Such was he : his work is done.
But while the races of mankind endure,
Let his great example stand
Collossal, seen of every land,
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure :
Till in all lands and thro' all human story
The path of duty be the way to glory :
And let the land whose hearths he saved from
shame

For many and many an age proclaim
At civic revel and pomp and game,
And when the long-illuminated cities flame,
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,
Eternal honour to his name.

IX.

Peace, his triumph will be sung
By some yet unmoulded tongue
Far on in summers that we shall not see :
Peace, it is a day of pain
For one about whose patriarchal knee
Late the little children clung :
O peace, it is a day of pain
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain

Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.
Ours the pain, be his the gain !
More than is of man's degree
Must be with us, watching here
At this our great solemnity.
Whom we see not we revere ;
We revere, and we refrain
From talk of battles loud and vain,
And brawling memories all too free
For such a wise humility
As befits a solemn fane :
We revere, and while we hear
The tides of Music's golden sea
Setting toward eternity,
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,
Until we doubt not that for one so true
There must be other nobler work to do
Than when he fought at Waterloo,
And Victor he must ever be.
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will ;
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll
Round us, each with different powers,
And other forms of life than ours,
What know we greater than the soul ?
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears :
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and
tears :
The black earth yawns : the mortal disappears ;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;

He is gone who seem'd so great.—
 Gone ; but nothing can bereave him
 Of the force he made his own
 Being here, and we believe him
 Something far advanced in State,
 And that he wears a truer crown
 Than any wreath that man can weave him.
 Speak no more of his renown,
 Lay your earthly fancies down,
 And in the vast cathedral leave him.
 God accept him, Christ receive him.



THE THIRD OF FEBRUARY, 1852.

MY Lords, we heard you speak : you told us all
That England's honest censure went too far ;
That our free press should cease to brawl,
Not sting the fiery Frenchman into war.
It was our ancient privilege, my Lords,
To fling whate'er we felt, not fearing, into words.

We love not this French God, the child of Hell,
Wild War, who breaks the converse of the wise ;
But though we love kind Peace so well,
We dare not ev'n by silence sanction lies.
It might be safe our censures to withdraw ;
And yet, my Lords, not well : there is a higher law.

As long as we remain, we must speak free,
Tho' all the storm of Europe on us break ;
No little German state are we,
But the one voice in Europe : we *must* speak ;
That if to-night our greatness were struck dead,
There might be left some record of the things we said.

If you be fearful, then must we be bold,
Our Britain cannot salve a tyrant o'er.
Better the waste Atlantic roll'd
On her and us and ours for evermore.
What ! have we fought for Freedom from our prime,
At last to dodge and palter with a public crime ?

Shall we fear *him* ? our own we never fear'd.

From our first Charles by force we wrung our
claims.

Prick'd by the Papal spur, we rear'd,

We flung the burthen of the second James.

I say, we *never* feared ! and as for these,

We broke them on the land, we drove them on the
seas.

And you, my Lords, you make the people muse

In doubt if you be of our Barons' breed —

Were those your sires who fought at Lewes ?

Is this the manly strain of Runnymede ?

O fall'n nobility, that, overawed,

Would lisp in honey'd whispers of this monstrous
fraud !

We feel, at least, that silence here were sin,

Not ours the fault if we have feeble hosts —

If easy patrons of their kin

Have left the last free race with naked coasts !

They knew the precious things they had to guard :

For us, we will not spare the tyrant one hard word.

Tho' niggard throats of Manchester may bawl,

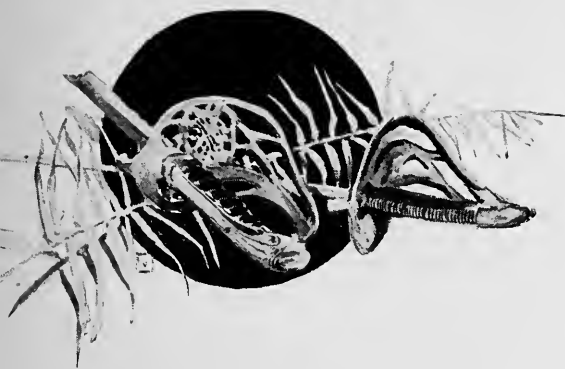
What England was, shall her true sons forget ?

We are not cotton-spinners all,

But some love England and her honour yet.

And these in our Thermopylæ shall stand,

And hold against the world this honour of the land.



THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

I.

HALF a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
“Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!” he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

II.

“Forward, the Light Brigade!”
Was there a man dismay’d?
Not tho’ the soldier knew
Some one had blunder’d:

Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die :
Into the valley of Death
 Rode the six hundred.

III.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
 Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
 Rode the six hundred.

IV.

Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there
Charging an army, while
 All the world wonder'd :
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke ;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
 Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
 Not the six hundred.

V.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd ;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

VI.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wonder'd.
Honour the charge they made !
Honour the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred !

ODE SUNG AT THE OPENING OF THE
INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

I.

UPLIFT a thousand voices full and sweet,
In this wide hall with earth's invention stored,
And praise the invisible universal Lord,
Who lets once more in peace the nations meet,
Where Science, Art, and Labour have outpour'd
Their myriad horns of plenty at our feet.

II.

O silent father of our kings to be
Mourn'd in this golden hour of jubilee,
For this, for all, we weep our thanks to thee !

III.

The world-compelling plan was thine,—
And, lo ! the long laborious miles
Of Palace ; lo ! the giant aisles,
Rich in model and design ;
Harvest-tool and husbandry,
Loom and wheel and enginery,
Secrets of the sullen mine,
Steel and gold, and corn and wine,
Fabric rough, or fairy-fine,
Sunny tokens of the Line,



“ARMED TOWERS.”

Polar marvels, and a feast
Of wonder, out of West and East,
And shapes and hues of Art divine !
All of beauty, all of use,
That one fair planet can produce,
 Brought from under every star,
Blown from over every main,
And mixt, as life is mixt with pain,
 The works of peace with works of war.

IV.

Is the goal so far away ?
Far, how far no tongue can say,
Let us dream our dream to-day.

V.

O ye, the wise who think, the wise who reign,
From growing commerce loose her latest chain,
And let the fair white-wing'd peacemaker fly
To happy havens under all the sky,
And mix the seasons and the golden hours ;
Till each man find his own in all men's good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood,
Breaking their mailed fleets and armed towers,
And ruling by obeying Nature's powers,
And gathering all the fruits of earth and crown'd
 with all her flowers.

A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

MARCH 7, 1863.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,

Alexandra !

Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,

But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee,

Alexandra !

Welcome her, thunders of fort and of fleet !

Welcome her, thundering cheer of the street !

Welcome her, all things youthful and sweet,

Scatter the blossom under her feet !

Break, happy land, into earlier flowers !

Make music, O bird, in the new-budded bowers !

Blazon your mottoes of blessing and prayer !

Welcome her, welcome her, all that is ours !

Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare !

Flags, flutter out upon turrets and towers !

Flames, on the windy headland flare !

Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire !

Cash, ye bells, in the merry March air !

Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire !

Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and higher

Melt into stars for the land's desire !

Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,

Roll as a ground-swell dash'd on the strand,

Roar as the sea when he welcomes the land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's desire,

The sea-kings' daughter as happy as fair,
Blissful bride of a blissful heir,
Bride of the heir of the kings of the sea —
O joy to the people and joy to the throne,
Come to us, love us and make us your own :
For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
Teuton or Celt, or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra !

A WELCOME TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
MARIE ALEXANDROVNA, DUCHESS OF
EDINBURGH.

MARCH 7, 1874.

I.

THE SON of him with whom we strove for power —
Whose will is lord thro' all his world-domain —
Who made the serf a man, and burst his chain —
Has given our Prince his own imperial Flower,
Alexandrovna.

And welcome, Russian flower, a people's pride,
To Britain, when her flowers begin to blow !
From love to love, from home to home you go,
From mother unto mother, stately bride,
Marie Alexandrovna !

II.

The golden news along the steppes is blown,
And at thy name the Tartar tents are stirr'd ;
Elburz and all the Caucasus have heard ;
And all the sultry palms of India known,
Alexandrovna.

The voices of our universal sea
On capes of Afric as on cliffs of Kent,
The Maoris and that Isle of Continent,
And loyal pines of Canada murmur thee,
Marie Alexandrovna !

III.

Fair empires branching, both, in lusty life ! —
Yet Harold's England fell to Norman swords ;
Yet thine own land has bow'd to Tartar hordes
Since English Harold gave its throne a wife,
Alexandrovna !
For thrones and peoples are as waifs that swing,
And float or fall, in endless ebb and flow ;
But who love best have best the grace to know
That Love by right divine is deathless king,
Marie Alexandrovna !

IV.

And Love has led thee to the stranger land,
Where men are bold and strongly say their say ; —
See, empire upon empire smiles to-day,
As thou with thy young lover hand in hand,
Alexandrovna !
So now thy fuller life is in the west,
Whose hand at home was gracious to thy poor :
Thy name was blest within the narrow door ;
Here also, Marie, shall thy name be blest,
Marie Alexandrovna !

V.

Shall fears and jealous hatreds flame again?
Or at thy coming, Princess, everywhere,
The blue heaven break, and some diviner air
Breathe thro' the world and change the hearts of
men,

Alexandrovna?

But hearts that change not, love that cannot cease,
And peace be yours, the peace of soul in soul!
And howsoever this wild world may roll,
Between your people's truth and manful peace,
Alfred—Alexandrovna!



THE GRANDMOTHER.

I.

AND Willy, my eldest-born, is gone, you say, little
Anne?

Ruddy and white, and strong on his legs, he looks
like a man.

And Willy's wife has written : she never was over-
wise,

Never the wife for Willy : he wouldn't take my
advice.

II.

For, Annie, you see, her father was not the man to
save,

Hadn't a head to manage, and drank himself into
his grave.

Pretty enough, very pretty ! but I was against it
for one.

Eh !—but he wouldn't hear me — and Willy, you
say, is gone.

III.

Willy, my beauty, my eldest-born, the flower of the
flock ;

Never a man could fling him : for Willy stood like
a rock.

“Here's a leg for a babe of a week !” says doctor ;
and he would be bound,

There was not his like that year in twenty parishes
round.

IV.

Strong of his hands, and strong on his legs, but still
of his tongue !

I ought to have gone before him : I wonder he went
so young.

I cannot cry for him, Annie : I have not long to
stay ;

Perhaps I shall see him the sooner, for he lived far
away.

V.

Why do you look at me, Annie? you think I am
hard and cold ;
But all my children have gone before me, I am so
old :
I cannot weep for Willy, nor can I weep for the rest ;
Only at your age, Annie, I could have wept with the
best.

VI.

For I remember a quarrel I had with your father,
my dear,
All for a slanderous story, that cost me many a tear.
I mean your grandfather, Annie : it cost me a world
of woe,
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

VII.

For Jenny, my cousin, had come to the place, and
I knew right well
That Jenny had tript in her time : I knew, but I
would not tell
And she to be coming and slandering me, the base
little liar !
But the tongue is a fire as you know, my dear, the
tongue is a fire.

VIII.

And the parson made it his text that week, and he
said likewise,
That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest
of lies,

That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought
with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to
fight.

IX.

And Willy had not been down to the farm for a
week and a day ;
And all things look'd half-dead, tho' it was the
middle of May.
Jenny, to slander me, who knew what Jenny had
been !
But soiling another, Annie, will never make one-
self clean.

X.

And I cried myself well-nigh blind, and all of an
evening late
I climb'd to the top of the garth, and stood by the
road at the gate.
The moon like a rick on fire was rising over the
dale,
And whit, whit, whit, in the bush beside me chir-
rupt the nightingale.

XI.

All of a sudden he stopt : there past by the gate of
the farm,
Willy,— he didn't see me,— and Jenny hung on
his arm,



"The moon like a rick on
fire
was rising over the dale"

Out into the road I started, and spoke I scarce
knew how ;
Ah, there's no fool like the old one — it makes me
angry now.

XII.

Willy stood up like a man, and look'd the thing
that he meant ;
Jenny, the viper, made me a mocking curtsey and
went.
And I said, "Let us part : in a hundred years it'll
all be the same,
You cannot love me at all, if you love not my good
name."

XIII.

And he turn'd, and I saw his eyes all wet, in the
sweet moonshine :
"Sweetheart, I love you so well that your good
name is mine.
And what do I care for Jane, let her speak of you
well or ill ;
But marry me out of hand : we two shall be happy
still."

XIV.

"Marry you, Willy !" said I, "but I needs must
speak my mind,
And I fear you'll listen to tales, be jealous and hard
and unkind.

But he turn'd and claspt me in his arms, and answer'd, "No, love, no ; '
Seventy years ago, my darling, seventy years ago.

XV.

So Willy and I were wedded : I wore a lilac gown ;
And the ringers rang with a will, and he gave the
ringers a crown.
But the first that ever I bare was dead before he
was born,
Shadow and shine is life, little Annie, flower and
thorn.

XVI.

That was the first time, too, that ever I thought of
death.
There lay the sweet little body that never had
drawn a breath.
I had not wept, little Anne, not since I had been a
wife ;
But I wept like a child that day, for the babe had
fought for his life.

XVII.

His dear little face was troubled, as if with anger or
pain :
I look'd at the still little body — his trouble had all
been in vain.
For Willy I cannot weep, I shall see him another
morn :
But I wept like a child for the child that was dead
before he was born.

XVIII.

But he cheer'd me, my good man, for he seldom
said me nay :
Kind, like a man, was he ; like a man, too, would
have his way :
Never jealous — not he : we had many a happy year ;
And he died, and I could not weep — my own time
seem'd so near.

XIX.

But I wish'd it had been God's will that I, too, then
could have died :
I began to be tired a little, and fain had slept at his
side.
And that was ten years back, or more, if I don't
forget :
But as to the children, Annie, they're all about me
yet.

XX.

Pattering over the boards, my Annie who left me at
two,
Patter she goes, my own little Annie, an Annie like
you :
Pattering over the boards, she comes and goes at
her will,
While Harry is in the five-acre and Charlie plough-
ing the hill,

XXI.

And Harry and Charlie, I hear them too — they sing
to their team :
Often they come to the door in a pleasant kind of
a dream.
They come and sit by my chair, they hover about
my bed —
I am not always certain if they be alive or dead.

XXII.

And yet I know for a truth, there's none of them
left alive ;
For Harry went at sixty, your father at sixty-five :
And Willy, my eldest-born, at nigh threescore and
ten ;
I knew them all as babies, and now they're elderly
men.

XXIII.

For mine is a time of peace, it is not often I grieve ;
I am oftener sitting at home in my father's farm at
eve :
And the neighbours come and laugh and gossip,
and so do I ;
I find myself often laughing at things that have
long gone by

XXIV.

To be sure the preacher says, our sins should make
us sad :
But mine is a time of peace, and there is Grace to
be had ;

And God, not man, is the Judge of us all when life
shall cease ;
And in this Book, little Annie, the message is one
of Peace.

XXV.

And age is a time of
peace, so it be free
from pain,
And happy has been my
life ; but I would not
live it again.
I seem to be tired a little,
that's all, and long for
rest ;
Only at your age, Annie
I could have wept with
the best.



XXVI.

So Willy has gone, my
beauty, my eldest-
born, my flower ;
But how can I weep for
Willy, he has but gone
for an hour,—

“AND SO DO I.”

Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the
next ;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to
be vexed ?

XXVII.

And Willy's wife has written, she never was over-
wise.

Get me my glasses, Annie : thank God that I keep
my eyes.

There is but a trifle left you, when I shall have
past away.

But stay with the old woman now : you cannot
have long to stay.

NORTHERN FARMER.

OLD STYLE.

I.

WHEER 'asta beän saw long and meä liggin' 'ere
aloän?

Noorse? thoort nowt o' a noorse: whoy, Doctor's
abeäu an' agoän:

Says that I moänt 'a naw moor aäle: but I beänt a
fool:

Git ma my aäle, fur I beänt a-gooïn' to breäk my
rule.

II.

Doctors, they knaws nowt, fur a says what's naw-
ways true:

Naw soort o' koïnd o' use to saäy the things that a
do.

I've 'ed my point o' aäle ivry noight sin' I beän 'ere,
An' I've 'ed my quart ivry market-noight for foorty
year.

III.

Parson's a beän loikewise, an' a sittin' ere o' my
bed.

"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to 'issén, my
friend," a said,

An' a towl ma my sins, an's toithe were due, an' I
 gied it in hond;
 I done moy duty boy 'um, as I 'a done boy the lond.



“THE AMOIGHTY’S A TAÄKING O’ YOU TO ‘ISSÉN.”

IV.

Larn’d a ma’ beä. I reckons I ’annot sa mooch to
 larn.
 But a cast oop, thot a did, ’boot Bessy Marris’s barne.

Thaw a knaws I hallus voåted wi' Squoire an' choorch
an' staäte,
An' i' the woost o' toimes I wur niver agin the raäte.

V.

An' I hallus coom'd to 's' choorch afoor moy Sally
wur deäd,
An' 'eerd 'um a bummin' awaäy loike a buzzard-
clock ¹ ower my 'eäd,
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I thowt a
'ad summut to saäy,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said an' I
coom'd awaäy.

VI.

Bessy Marris's barne ! tha knaws she laäid it to meä.
Mowt a beän, mayhap, for she wur a bad un, sheä.
'Siver, I kep 'um, I kep 'um, my lass, tha mun
understond ;
I done moy duty boy 'um as I 'a done boy the lond.

VII.

But Parson a cooms an' a goos, an' a says it eäsy an'
freeä
"The amoighty's a taäkin o' you to issén, my
friend," says 'eä.
I weänt saäy men be loiars, thaw summun said it
in 'aäste :
But 'e reäds wonn sarmin a weeäk, an' I 'a stubb'd
Thurnaby waäste.

¹ Cockchafer.

VIII.

D'ya moind the waäste, my lass? naw, naw, 'tha
was not born then ;
Theer wur a boggle in it, I often 'eerd 'um mysen ;
Moäst loike a butter-bump,¹ fur I 'eerd 'um aboot
an' aboot,
But I stubb'd 'um oop wi' the lot, an' raäved an'
rembled 'um oot.

IX.

Keäper's it wur ; fo' they fun 'um theer a-laäid of 'is
faäce
Doon i' the woild 'enemies² afoor I coom'd to the
plaäce.
Noäks or Thimbleby — toäner 'ed shot 'um as deääd
as a naäil.
Noäks wur 'ang'd for it oop at 'soize — but git ma
my aäle.

X.

Dubbut loook at the waäste : theer warn't not feeäd
for a cow ;
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' loook at it
now —
Warn't worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's lots o'
feeäd,
Fourscoor yows upon it an' some on it doon i' seeäd.

¹ Bittern.² Anemones.

XI.

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd
it at fall,
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plow thruff it
an' all,
If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let ma aloän,
Meä, wi' haäte oonderd haäcre o' Squire's, an' lond
o' my oän.

XII.

Do godamoighty know what a's doing a-taäkin' o'
meä?
I beänt wonn as saws 'ere a beän an' yonder a peä;
An' Squire 'ull be sa mad an' all — a' dear a' dear!
And I 'a managed for Squire coom Michaelmas
thutty year.

XIII.

A mowt 'a taäen owd Joänes, as 'ant nor a 'aäpoth
o' sense,
Or a mowt 'a taäen young Robins — a niver mended
a fence:
But godamoighty a moost taäke meä an' taäke ma
now.
Wi' aäf the cows to cauve an' Thurnaby hoälms to
plow!

XIV.

Loook 'ow quoloty smoiles when they seeäs ma a
passin' boy,
Says to thessén naw doubt "what a man a beä
sewerloy!"
Fur they knows what I beän to Squoire sin fust a
coom'd to the 'All;
I done moy duty by Squoire an' I done moy duty
boy hall.

XV.

Squoire's i' Lunnon, an' summun I reckons 'ull 'a
to wroite,
For whoä's to howd the lond ater meä thot muddles
ma quoit;
Sartin-sewer I beä, thot a weänt niver give it to
Joänes,
Naw, nor a moänt to Robins — a niver rembles the
stoäns.

XVI.

But summun 'ull come ater meä mayhap wi' 'is kittle
o' steäm
Huzzin' an' maäzin' the blessed feälds wi' the Divil's
oän teäm.
Sin' I mun doy I mun doy, thaw loife they says is
sweet,
But sin' I mun doy I mun doy, for I couldn abeär
to see it.

XVII.

What atta stannin' theer fur, an' doesn bring ma the
aäle?

Doctor's a 'toättler, lass, an a's hallus i' the owd
taäle;



"GIT MA MY AÄLE I TELL THA."

I weänt breäk rules fur Doctor, a knaws naw moor
nor a floy;

Git ma my aäle I tell tha, an' if I mun doy I mun
doy.

NORTHERN FARMER.

NEW STYLE.

I.

DOSN'T thou 'ear my 'erse's legs, as they canters
awaäy?

Proputty, proputty, proputty — that's what I 'ears
'em saäy.

Proputty, proputty, proputty — Sam, thou's an ass
for thy paaïns :

Theer's moor sense i' one o' 'is legs nor in all thy
braaïns.

II.

Woä — theer's a craw to pluck wi' tha' Sam : yon's
parson's 'ouse —

Dosn't thou know that a man mun be eäther a man
or a mouse?

Time to think on it then ; for thou'll be twenty to
weeäk.¹

Proputty, proputty — woä then woä — let ma 'ear
mysén speäk.

III.

Me an' thy muther, Sammy, 'as beän a-talkin' o'
thee ;

Thou's beän talkin' to muther, an' she beän a tellin'
it me.

¹ This week.

Thou'll not marry for munny — thou's sweet upo'
 parson's lass —
 Noä — thou'll marry for luvv — an' we boäth on us
 thinks tha an ass.

IV.

Seeä'd her todaäy goä by—
 Sääint's-daäy — t h e y
 was ringing the bells.
 She's a beauty thou thinks
 — an' soä is scoors o'
 gells,
 Them as 'as munny an'
 all — wot's a beauty? —
 the flower as blows.
 But propuppy, propuppy
 sticks, and propuppy,
 propuppy graws.

V.

Do'ant be stunt: ¹ taäke
 time: I knaws what
 maäkes tha sa mad.
 Warn't I craäzed fur the
 lasses mysén when I
 wur a lad?

But I knaw'd a Quaäker feller as often 'as tow'd ma
 this:

“Doänt thou marry for munny, but goä wheer
 munny is!”



“SHE'S A BEAUTY, THOU THINKS.”

¹ Obstinate.

VI.

An' I went wheer munny war : an' thy muther coom
to 'and,
Wi' lots o' munny laaïd by, an' a nicetish bit o'
land.
Maäybe she warn't a beauty :— I niver giv it a
thowt —
But warn't she as good to cuddle an' kiss as a lass
as 'ant nowt?

VII.

Parson's lass 'ant nowt, an' she weänt 'a nowt when
'e's deäd,
Mun be a guvness, lad, or summut, and addle ¹ her
breäd :
Why? fur 'e's nobbut a curate, an' weänt niver git
naw 'igher ;
An' 'e maäde the bed as 'e ligs on afoor 'e coom'd
to the shire.

VIII.

An thin 'e coom'd to the parish wi' lots o' Varsity
debt,
Stook to his taaïl they did, an' 'e 'ant got shut on
'em yet.
An' 'e ligs on 'is back i' the grip, wi' noän to lend
'im a shove,
Woorse nor a far-welter'd ² yowe : fur, Sammy, 'e
married fur luvv.

¹ Earn. ² Or fow-welter'd,— said of a sheep lying on its
back in the furrow.

IX.

Luvv? what's luvv? thou can luvv thy lass an' 'er
munny too,
Maakin 'em goä together as they've good right to
do.
Could'n I luvv thy muther by cause o' 'er munny
laaïd by?
Naäy — fur I luvv'd 'er a vast sight moor fur it:
reäson why.

X.

Ay an' thy muther says thou wants to marry the
lass,
Cooms of a gentleman burn: an' we boäth on us
thinks tha an ass.
Woä then, propuppy, wiltha? — an ass as near as
mays nowt¹ —
Woä then, wiltha? dangtha! — the bees is as fell as
owt.²

XI.

Breäk me a bit o' the esh for his 'eäd lad, out o' the
fence!
Gentleman burn! what's gentleman burn? is it shil-
lins an' peuce?
Propuppy, propuppy's ivrything 'ere, an', Sammy,
I'm blest
If it isn't the saäme oop yonder, fur them as 'as it's
the best.

¹ Makes nothing. ² The flies are as fierce as anything.

XII.

'Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into 'ouses an'
steäls,
Them as 'as coats to their backs an taäkes their
regular meäls.
Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's
to be 'ad.
Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp
is bad.

XIII.

Them or thir feythurs, thia sees, mun 'a beän a laäzy
lot,
Fur work mun 'a gone to the gittin' whiniver munny
was got.
Feyther 'ad ammost nowt; leästways 'is munny
was 'id.
But 'e tued an' moil'd 'issén deäd, an 'e died a good
un, 'e did.

XIV.

Loook thou theer wheer Wigglesby beck cooms
out by the 'ill!
Feyther run oop to the farm, an I runs oop to the
mill;
An' I'll run oop to the brig, an' that thou'll live to
see;
And if thou marries a good un I'll leäve the land to
thee.

XV.

Thim's my noätions, Sammy, wheerby I means to
stick ;

But if thou marries a bad un, I'll leäve the land to
Dick.—

Coom oop, propuppy, propuppy — that's what I 'ears
'im saäy —

Propuppy, propuppy, propuppy — canter an' canter
awaäy.



THE DAISY.

WRITTEN AT EDINBURGH.

O LOVE, what hours were thine and mine,
In lands of palm and southern pine ;
 In lands of palm, of orange-blossom,
Of olive, aloe, and maize and vine.

What Roman strength Turbìa show'd
In ruin, by the mountain road ;
 How like a gem, beneath, the city
Of little Monaco, basking, glow'd.

How richly down the rocky dell
The torrent vineyard streaming fell
To meet the sun and sunny waters,
That only heaved with a summer swell.

What slender campanili grew
By bays, the peacock's neck in hue ;
Where, here and there, on sandy beaches
A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.

How young Columbus seem'd to rove,
Yet present in his natal grove,
Now watching high on mountain cornice,
And steering, now, from a purple cove,

Now pacing mute by ocean's rim ;
Till, in a narrow street and dim,
I stay'd the wheels at Cogoletto,
And drank, and loyally drank to him.

Nor knew we well what pleased us most,
Not the clipt palm of which they boast ;
But distant colour, happy hamlet,
A moulder'd citadel on the coast,

Or tower, or high hill-convent, seen
A light amid its olives green ;
Or olive-hoary cape in ocean ;
Or rosy blossom in hot ravine,

Where oleanders flush'd the bed
Of silent torrents, gravel-spread ;
And, crossing, oft we saw the glisten
Of ice, far up on a mountain head.

We loved that hall, tho' white and cold,
Those niched shapes of noble mould,
A princely people's awful princes,
The grave, severe Genovese of old.

At Florence too what golden hours,
In those long galleries were ours ;
What drives about the fresh Cascinè,
Or walks in Boboli's ducal bowers.

In bright vignettes, and each complete,
Of tower or duomo, sunny-sweet,
Or palace, how the city glitter'd,
Thro' cypress avenues, at our feet.

But when we crost the Lombard plain
Remember what a plague of rain ;
Of rain at Reggio, rain at Parma ;
At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain.

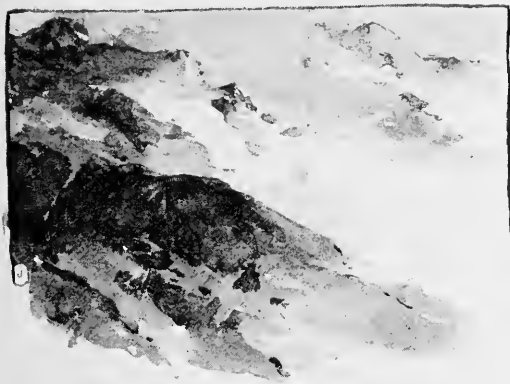
And stern and sad (so rare the smiles
Of sunlight) look'd the Lombard piles ;
Porch-pillars on the lion resting,
And sombre, old, colonnaded aisles.

O Milan, O the chanting quires,
The giant windows' blazon'd fires,
The height, the space, the gloom, the glory!
A mount of marble, a hundred spires !

I climb'd the roofs at break of day ;
Sun-smitten Alps before me lay.

I stood among the silent statues,
And statued pinnacles, mute as they.

How faintly-flush'd, how phantom-fair
Was Monte Rosa, hanging there



"SUN-SMITTEN ALPS BEFORE ME LAY."

A thousand shadowy-pencill'd valleys
And snowy dells in a golden air.

Remember how we came at last
To Como ; shower and storm and blast
Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded ; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on the Lariano crept
To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept ;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavè above the lake.

What more ? we took our last adieu,
And up the snowy Splugen drew,
But ere we reach'd the highest summit
I pluck'd a daisy, I gave it you.

It told of England then to me,
And now it tells of Italy.
O love, we two shall go no longer
To lands of summer across the sea ;

So dear a life your arms enfold
Whose crying is a cry for gold :
Yet here to-night in this dark city,
When ill and weary, alone and cold,
I found, tho' crush'd to hard and dry,
This nurseling of another sky
Still in the little book you lent me,
And where you tenderly laid it by :

And I forgot the clouded Forth,
The gloom that saddens Heaven and Earth
The bitter east, the misty summer
And gray metropolis of the North.

Perchance, to lull the throbs of pain,
Perchance, to charm a vacant brain,
Perchance, to dream you still beside me,
My fancy fled to the South again.



TO THE REV. F. D. MAURICE.

JANUARY, 1854.

COME, when no graver cares employ,
Godfather, come and see your boy,
Your presence will be sun in winter,
Making the little one leap for joy.

For, being of that honest few,
Who give the Fiend himself his due,
Should eighty-thousand college-councils
Thunder "Anathema," friend, at you ;

Should all our churchmen foam in spite
At you, so careful of the right,
Yet one lay-hearth would give you welcome
(Take it and come) to the Isle of Wight ;

Where, far from noise and smoke of town,
I watch the twilight falling brown
All round a careless-order'd garden
Close to the ridge of a noble down.

You'll have no scandal while you dine,
But honest talk and wholesome wine,
And only hear the magpie gossip
Garrulous under a roof of pine :

For groves of pine on either hand,
To break the blast of winter, stand ;
And further on, the hoary Channel
Tumbles a billow on chalk and sand ;

Where, if below the milky steep
Some ship of battle slowly creep,
And on thro' zones of light and shadow
Glimmer away to the lonely deep,

We might discuss the Northern sin
Which made a selfish war begin ;
Dispute the claims, arrange the chances ;
Emperor, Ottoman, which shall win :

Or whether war's avenging rod
Shall lash all Europe into blood ;
Till you should turn to dearer matters,
Dear to the man that is dear to God ;

How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings, of the poor ;
How gain in life, as life advances,
Valour and charity more and more.

Come, Maurice, come : the lawn as yet
Is hoar with rime, or spongy-wet ;
But when the wreath of March has blossom'd,
Crocus, anemone, violet,

Or later, pay one visit here,
For those are few we hold as dear ;
Nor pay but one, but come for many,
Many and many a happy year.

IN THE VALLEY OF CAUTERETZ.

ALL along the valley, stream that flashest white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the night,
All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two and thirty years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two and thirty years were a mist that rolls away ;
For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice to me.



"THE VOICE OF THE DEAD WAS A LIVING VOICE TO ME."

WILL.

I.

O WELL, for him whose will is strong !
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong :
For him nor moves the loud world's random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel-crown'd.

II.

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended Will,
And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still !
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

IN THE GARDEN AT SWAINSTON.

NIGHTINGALES warbled without,
Within was weeping for thee :
Shadows of three dead men
Walk'd in the walks with me,
Shadows of three dead men and thou wast one of
the three.

Nightingales sang in his woods :
The Master was far away :
Nightingales warbled and sang
Of a passion that lasts but a day ;
Still in the house in his coffin the Prince of
courtesy lay.

Two dead men have I known
In courtesy like to thee :
Two dead men have I loved
With a love that ever will be :
Three dead men have I loved and thou art last of
the three.

THE FLOWER.

ONCE in a golden hour
I cast to earth a seed.
Up there came a flower,
The people said, a weed.

To and fro they went
Thro' my garden-bower,
And muttering discontent
Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall
It wore a crown of light,
But thieves from o'er the wall
Stole the seed by night.

Sow'd it far and wide
By every town and tower,
Till all the people cried,
"Splendid is the flower."

Read my little fable :
He that runs may read.
Most can raise the flowers now,
For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,
And some are poor indeed ;
And now again the people
Call it but a weed.



"STOLE THE SEED BY NIGHT."

REQUIESCAT.

FAIR is her cottage in its place,
Where yon broad water sweetly slowly glides.
It sees itself from thatch to base
Dream in the sliding tides.

And fairer she, but ah how soon to die !
Her quiet dream of life this hour may cease.
Her peaceful being slowly passes by
To some more perfect peace.



"IT SEES ITSELF FROM THATCH TO BASE."

THE SAILOR BOY.

HE rose at dawn and, fired with hope,
Shot o'er the seething harbour-bar,
And reach'd the ship and caught the rope,
And whistled to the morning star.

And while he whistled long and loud
He heard a fierce mermaiden cry,
"O boy, tho' thou art young and proud,
I see the place where thou wilt lie.

"The sands and yeasty surges mix
In caves about the dreary bay,
And on thy ribs the limpet sticks,
And in thy heart the scrawl shall play."

"Fool," he answer'd, "death is sure
To those that stay and those that roam,
But I will nevermore endure
To sit with empty hands at home.

"My mother clings about my neck,
My sisters crying, 'Stay for shame ;'
My father raves of death and wreck,
They are all to blame, they are all to blame.

“God help me ! save I take my part
Of danger on the roaring sea,
A devil rises in my heart,
Far worse than any death to me.”



THE ISLET.

“WHITHER, O whither, love, shall we go,
For a score of sweet little summers or so?”
The sweet little wife of the singer said,
On the day that follow’d the day she was wed,
“Whither, O whither, love, shall we go?”
And the singer shaking his curly head
Turn’d as he sat, and struck the keys
There at his right with a sudden crash,
Singing, “And shall it be over the seas
With a crew that is neither rude nor rash,
But a bevy of Eroses apple-cheek’d,
In a shallop of crystal ivory-beak’d,
With a satin sail of a ruby glow,
To a sweet little Eden on earth that I know,
A mountain islet pointed and peak’d;
Waves on a diamond shingle dash,
Cataract brooks to the ocean run,
Fairly-delicate palaces shine
Mixt with myrtle and clad with vine,
And overstream’d and silvery-streak’d
With many a rivulet high against the Sun
The facets of the glorious mountain flash
Above the valleys of palm and pine.”

“Thither, O thither, love, let us go.”

“No, no, no !

For in all that exquisite isle, my dear,

There is but one bird with a musical throat,
And his compass is but of a single note,
That it makes one weary to hear."

"Mock me not ! mock me not ! love, let us go."

"No, love, no.

For the bud ever breaks into bloom on the tree,
And a storm never wakes on the lonely sea,
And a worm is there in the lonely wood,
That pierces the liver and blackens the blood ;
And makes it a sorrow to be."



I.

THE CITY CHILD.

DAINTY little maiden, whither would you wander?
Whither from this pretty home, the home where
mother dwells?

"Far and far away," said the dainty little maiden,
"All among the gardens, auriculas, anemones,
Roses and lilies and Canterbury-bells."

Dainty little maiden, whither would you wander?
Whither from this pretty house, this city-house of
ours?

"Far and far away," said the dainty little maiden,
"All among the meadows, the clover and the
clematis,
Daisies and kingcups and honeysuckle-flowers."



II.

MINNIE AND WINNIE.

MINNIE and Winnie
Slept in a shell.
Sleep, little ladies !
And they slept well.

Pink was the shell within,
Silver without ;
Sounds of the great sea
Wander'd about.

Sleep, little ladies !
Wake not soon !
Echo on echo
Dies to the moon.

Two bright stars
Peep'd into the shell.
“ What are they dreaming of?
Who can tell ? ”

Started a green linnet
Out of the croft ;
Wake, little ladies,
The sun is aloft !

THE SPITEFUL LETTER.

HERE, it is here, the close of the year,
And with it a spiteful letter.
My name in song has done him much wrong,
For himself has done much better.

O little bard, is your lot so hard,
If men neglect your pages?
I think not much of yours or of mine,
I hear the roll of the ages.

Rhymes and rhymes in the range of the times!
Are mine for the moment stronger?
Yet hate me not, but abide your lot,
I last but a moment longer.

This faded leaf, our names are as brief;
What room is left for a hater?
Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,
For it hangs one moment later.

Greater than I — is that your cry?
And men will live to see it.
Well — if it be so — so it is, you know;
And if it be so, so be it.

Brief, brief is a summer leaf,
But this is a time of hollies.
O hollies and ivies and evergreens,
How I hate the spites and the follies!

LITERARY SQUABBLES.

AN God ! the petty fools of rhyme
That shriek and sweat in pigmy wars
Before the stony face of Time,
And look'd at by the silent stars :

Who hate each other for a song,
And do their little best to bite
And pinch their brethren in the throng,
And scratch the very dead for spite :

And strain to make an inch of room
For their sweet selves, and cannot hear
The sullen Lethe rolling doom
On them and theirs and all things here :

When one small touch of Charity
Could lift them nearer God-like state
Than if the crowded Orb should cry
Like those who cried Diana great :

And I too talk, and lose the touch
I talk of. Surely, after all,
The noblest answer unto such
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

THE VICTIM.

I.

A PLAGUE upon the people fell,
A famine after laid them low,
Then thorpe and byre arose in fire,
For on them brake the sudden foe ;
So thick they died the people cried,
“The Gods are moved against the land.”
The Priest in horror about his altar
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand :
“ Help us from famine
And plague and strife !
What would you have of us ?
Human life ?
Were it our nearest,
Were it our dearest,
(Answer, O answer)
We give you his life.”

II.

But still the foeman spoil'd and burn'd,
And cattle died, and deer in wood,
And bird in air, and fishes turn'd
And whiten'd all the rolling flood ;
And dead men lay all over the way,
Or down in a furrow scathed with flame :



THE PRIEST IN HORROR ABOUT HIS ALTAR."

And ever and aye the Priesthood moan'd,
Till at last it seem'd that an answer came.
 "The King is happy
 In child and wife ;
 Take you his dearest,
 Give us a life."

III.

The Priest went out by heath and hill ;
The King was hunting in the wild ;
They found the mother sitting still ;
She cast her arms about the child.
The child was only eight summers old,
His beauty still with his years increased,
His face was ruddy, his hair was gold,
He seem'd a victim due to the priest.
 The Priest beheld him,
 And cried with joy,
 "The Gods have answer'd :
 We give them the boy."

IV.

The King return'd from out the wild,
He bore but little game in hand :
The mother said, "They have taken the child
To spill his blood and heal the land :
The land is sick, the people diseased,
And blight and famine on all the lea :

The holy Gods, they must be appeased,
So I pray you tell the truth to me.
They have taken our son,
They will have his life.
Is *he* your dearest?
Or I, the wife?"

V.

The King bent low, with hand on brow,
He stay'd his arms upon his knee :
"O wife, what use to answer now?
For now the Priest has judged for me."
The King was shaken with holy fear ;
"The Gods," he said, "would have chosen well ;
Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot tell !"
But the Priest was happy,
His victim won :
"We have his dearest,
His only son !"

VI.

The rites prepared, the victim bared,
The knife uprising toward the blow
To the altar-stone she sprang alone,
"Me, not my darling, no !"
He caught her away with a sudden cry ;
Suddenly from him brake his wife,
And shrieking "*I am his dearest, I —*
I am his dearest !" rush'd on the knife.

And the Priest was happy,
" O, Father Odin,
We give you a life.
Which was his nearest ?
Who was his dearest ?
The Gods have answer'd ;
We give them the wife !"



WAGES.

GLORY of warrior, glory of orator, glory of song,
Paid with a voice flying by to be lost on an endless sea —
Glory of Virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong —
Nay, but she aim'd not at glory, no lover of glory she :
Give her the glory of going on, and still to be.

The wages of sin is death : if the wages of Virtue be dust,
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly ?
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky :
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die.

THE HIGHER PANTHEISM.

THE sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills
and the plains —

Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who
reigns?

Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not that which
He seems?

Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live
in dreams?

Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and
limb,

Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from
Him?

Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason
why;

For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel
“ I am I ”?

Glory about thee, without thee; and thou fulfillest
thy doom

Making Him broken gleams, and a stifled splendour
and gloom.

Speak to Him thou, for He hears, and Spirit with
Spirit can meet —

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands
and feet.

God is law, say the wise ; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His
voice.

Law is God, say some : no God at all, says the fool ;
For all we have power to see is a straight staff bent
in a pool ;

And the ear of man cannot hear, and the eye of man
cannot see ;
But if we could see and hear, this Vision — were it
not He ?

THE VOICE AND THE PEAK.

I.

THE voice and the Peak

Far over summit and lawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of dawn!

II.

All night have I heard the voice
Rave over the rocky bar,
But thou wert silent in heaven,
Above thee glided the star.

III.

Hast thou no voice, O Peak,
That standest high above all?
“I am the voice of the Peak,
I roar and rave, for I fall.

IV.

“A thousand voices go
To North, South, East and West;
They leave the heights and are troubled,
And moan and sink to their rest.

V.

“The fields are fair beside them,
The chestnut towers in his bloom;
But they — they feel the desire of the deep —
Fall, and follow their doom.

VI.

“The deep has power on the height,
And the height has power on the deep ;
They are raised for ever and ever,
And sink again into sleep.”

VII.

Not raised for ever and ever,
But when their cycle is o'er,
The valley, the voice, the peak, the star
Pass, and are found no more.

VIII.

The Peak is high and flush'd
At his highest with sunrise fire ;
The Peak is high, and the stars are high,
And the thought of a man is higher.

IX.

A deep below the deep,
And a height beyond the height !
Our hearing is not hearing,
And our seeing is not sight.

X.

The voice and the Peak
Far into heaven withdrawn,
The lone glow and long roar
Green-rushing from the rosy thrones of dawn !

“FLOWER IN THE CRANNIED WALL.”

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower — but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

A DEDICATION.

DEAR, near and true — no truer Time himself
Can prove you, tho' he make you evermore
Dearer and nearer, as the rapid of life
Shoots to the fall — take this and pray that he
Who wrote it, honouring your sweet faith in him,
May trust himself ; and after praise and scorn,
As one who feels the immeasurable world,
Attain the wise indifference of the wise ;
And after Autumn past — if left to pass
His autumn into seeming-leafless days —
Draw toward the long frost and longest night,
Wearing his wisdom lightly, like the fruit
Which in our winter woodland looks a flower. ¹

¹ The fruit of the Spindle-tree (*Euonymus Europæus*).

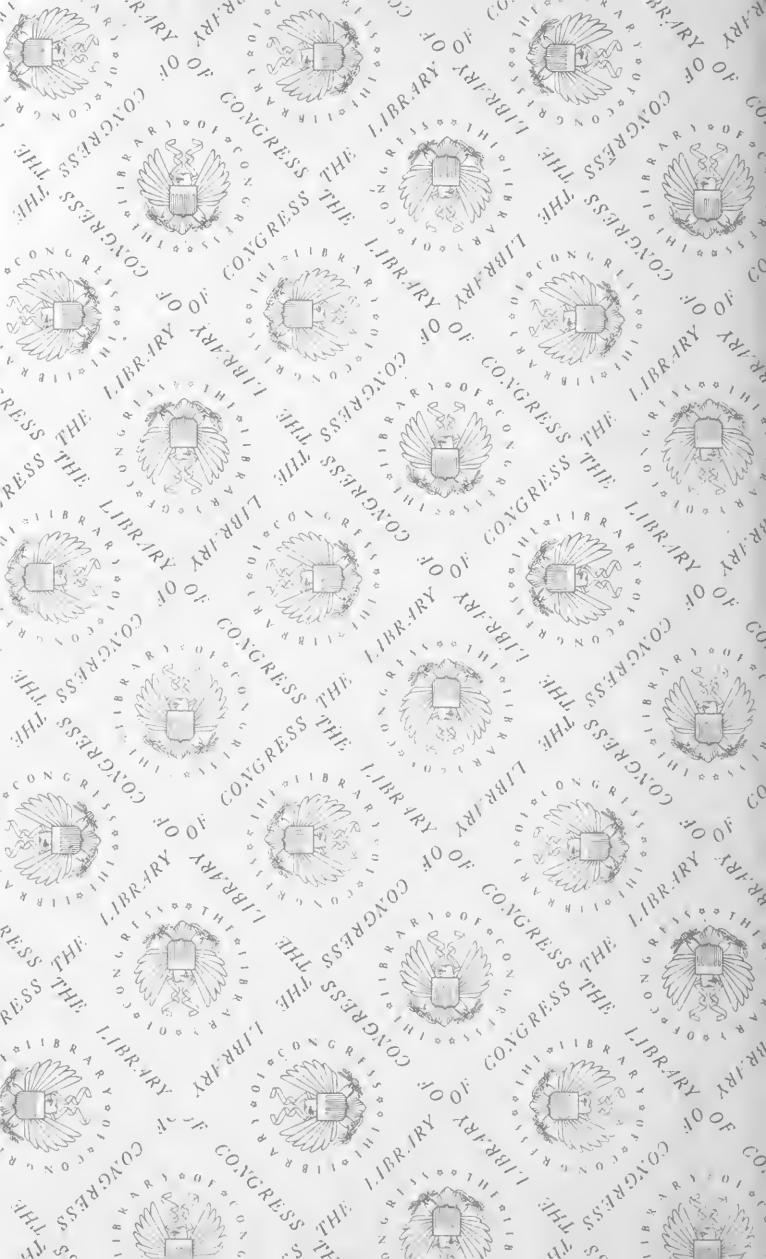


705

708

(384)







LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00011157075